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HISTORY OF LIBERTY.

PART II.

THE EARLY CHRISTIANS.

HISTORY

OF

LIBERTY.

PART II.

THE EARLY CHRISTIANS.

BY

SAMUEL ELIOT.

"He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world."
St. Matthew, xiii. 37, 38.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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BOOK III.

THE ROMAN CHRISTIANS.

A. D. 100–400.

(CONTINUED.)

BOOK III.

(CONTINUED.)

CHAPTER XIV.

THE EMPIRE OF CONSTANTINE.

"Builds life on death, on change duration founds."

POPE.

THE strength of the imperial centralization was shaken. But it was by no means overthrown. In sustaining itself through its recent perils, it seemed to have acquired a new vitality. Whether this was likely to endure may be gathered from a view of the Empire of Constantine.

A year or two after the overthrow of Licinius, Constantine arrived at Rome the sole sovereign of the Empire. It was to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of his accession,[1] that he came to the ancient capital as to the spot worthy above all others of witnessing his grandeur. Many of the Romans bore him unwilling allegiance on account of the changes with which, under his favor, the Heathen institutions

[1] The Vicennalia in 326.

had been oppressed and the Christian institutions elevated.[2] Of all his subjects, however, the Romans had become the most thoroughly submissive, and had he been content with severity towards them, they would never have done more than murmur against him. Even their murmurs subsided at his festivals.

In the midst of the general revelry, Constantine laid hands upon one of his own offspring. His eldest born, the Cæsar Crispus, was hurried from Rome to be executed at Pola in Istria. Darkness that no one would wish to disturb hangs over the motives which persuaded the father to destroy his son. Nor is there any clearness in the ancient chronicles concerning the events immediately subsequent to the execution. But it appears that on the report of Crispus's death, if not at the time of his arrest, a violent disturbance broke out at Rome. They who dared not rise to defend themselves, assumed the revenge of their prince. A large number of his friends were put to death. The Emperor was fain to seek another city, in which he could order his butcheries as well as observe his celebrations without being disturbed.[3]

Constantine determined that the new capital should surpass the old one. His first plan was to build near the site of the ancient Troy.[4] But the seven hills at Byzantium upon the Bosphorus seemed to promise a better foundation for the rival of Rome.[5]

[2] Zosimus, II. 29.

[3] Id., II. 29. Eutr., X. 4. It is said that one of Constantine's Præfects caused a scroll to be affixed to the palace gate with the words, "Neroniana Sæcula."

[4] Zos., II. 30.

[5] "Urbem nominis sui ad tan-

The Emperor himself traced the limits of the city. "I shall walk on," he said, "until He who goeth before me shall stand still." "It was God's will," declared Constantine in after times, "that I obeyed."[6]

Within the walls thus designed, rose the magnificent edifices that had been planned by the Emperor. It is not told how the multitude of workmen were provided for during their labors, or how they formed the lower classes of the city when completed. But we can conjecture. As every district, every city of the imperial realms was liable to be pillaged of its riches,[7] so was every one liable to be rifled of its artisans and its artists for the sake of the new capital. An edict addressed to one of Constantine's governors, after mentioning the want of "as many architects as possible," directs that all who were competent to enter the profession, "should be driven into it."[8] Another decree prohibits the landed proprietors of Asia Minor from disposing of their possessions unless they provide themselves with a mansion in the capital.[9] Whatever grants may have been made to the higher or to the lower orders,[10] thus obliged to take part in the building of the im-

tum fastigium evehere molitus est, ut Romæ æmulam faceret." Eutr., x. 4. "And nature," exclaims Gregory of Nazianzen, "that produced but a single sun, hath produced two Romes," διασὰς δὲ Ῥώμας. De Vit. Sua, 563.

[6] "Jubente Deo." Cod. Theod., lib. XIII. tit. v. 7.

[7] "Constantinopolis dedicatur pene omnium urbium nuditate." Hier., Chron., ad Ann. 331.

[8] "Architectis quam plurimis opus est; sed quia non sunt, sublimitas tua in provinciis Africanis ad hoc studium eos impellat." Immunity from public burdens is promised not only to the architects but to their parents as their reward. Cod. Theod., lib. XIII. tit. IV. 1.

[9] Cited in the Novell. Theod., tit. XII. ap. Cod. Theod., ed. Gothofred., tom. VI. ad fin.

[10] The largesses to the populace were very abundant. Soc., II. 13. Philost., II. 9.

perial city, it had not been built for them, but for their master. High up, above the squares and the palaces, the tribunals and the temples upon the seven hills, rose the statue of Constantine, imperious and disdainful, as it seemed, in receiving the homages of his subjects.[11] The Christians declared the city to be dedicated to the Deity. But the day of the dedication was marked by a Heathen festival in the circus. In the midst of worldly revelries, the name of Constantine was given to Constantinople.[12]

Heathen sovereigns would have blushed before their Christian successor to see how poorly they had comprehended their own majesty. The imperial power had never dilated so portentously as under the management of Constantine. His predecessors, it is true, had been adored as divinities. But it was a homage without faith that was offered to them. It was all, indeed, which they demanded. Constantine confessed himself a man. But he proclaimed himself the greatest of men as the chosen servant of the Deity, in whom a large proportion of his subjects believed. He would not be worshipped as a divinity. Such he did not believe himself, such he would not be believed by others to be. But he would be revered as a sovereign anointed by the One True God. From his head the diadem, seldom worn by the rulers before him, was seldom removed.[13]

[11] Philostorgius (II. 7) speaks of sacrifices and prayers addressed to the image of the Emperor. Perhaps to the nails of the cross with which the head of the statue is said (Zonaras, XIII. 3) to have been crowned.

[12] The dedication probably took place in 330. See Tillemont, Hist. des Emp., tom. IV. p. 239, and note, p. 653.

[13] "Caput exornans perpetuo diademate." Aur. Vict., Epit., XLI. 4.

His titles ran from Clemency, Tranquillity, Serenity, up to Perennity and Eternity. So near was he to the God whom he professed to serve, that he was often hailed as Divinity.

To describe those whom Constantine ruled, we must make a new classification. On the one hand, the orders superior to the sovereign had fallen into subordinate places at the court or in the camp. They were but the officers of the imperial government. On the other hand, the distinctions amongst the masses as Roman or provincials, bond or free, had sunk to secondary importance. Those whom the government released from its burdens formed one division. Another, much more numerous, consisted of the supporters, as they may be styled, of the government. A third was formed of the subjects at large.

The highest officers of government were still called Prætorian Præfects. But instead of retaining the authority, both military and civil, possessed by their predecessors, the later Præfects were obliged to surrender their military powers to Masters of the Soldiery. As civil officers, the Præfects exercised a vast authority. The Italian Præfect governed not only Italy, but several districts on the northern border of the peninsula and in Africa. Gaul, together with Britain, Spain, and a portion of the African territory, was placed under the Præfect of Gaul. The administration of the Illyrian Præfect extended from Italy as far as Thrace and the Ægean Sea. Beyond these limits, the realms of the East and the South were governed by the Oriental Præfect. The præfectures

were divided into thirteen dioceses, administered each by its Count or Vicar; while the dioceses were subdivided into one hundred and sixteen provinces under the supervision of Rectors or Correctors, Presidents and Consulars.[14] There were two additional Præfects, one for Rome and another for Constantinople. A host of subalterns filled up the meshes of the net thus thrown over the Empire.[15]

At the same time were instituted other offices of which the duties centred in the person of the Emperor. Treasurers and Notaries, Chamberlains and Masters crowded the halls of the imperial court. The higher functionaries were attended by troops of lower ones.[16] It would be useless to enumerate their titles. With no such power as that possessed by the administrative authorities, the attendants, as they may be styled, upon the sovereign were invested with the loftiest dignity. Not only "those advanced to posts within the palace"[17] were elevated. All who ministered to the personal splendor of the Emperor were visited with imperial favors.[18] An edict declares the purveyors of the imperial wardrobe to be relieved from all other obligations.[19] The nearer the

[14] These titles are from the Theodosian Code (lib. I. tit. v. *et seq.*), and the Notitia Dignitatum. Amédée Thierry has a sketch, De l'Admin. Prov. dans l'Empire de Rome, in the Compte Rendu of the Ac. Sc. Mor. et Pol., tom. VI. 2e série.

[15] "Un réseau de fonctionnaires." Guizot, Essais sur l'Hist.de France, Du Régime Municipal dans l'Emp. Rom., p. 17, ed. 1845.

[16] "La milice palatine comprenait non pas seulement les grands officiers et les gardes du palais, protecteurs on domestiques, mais tout l'ensemble de l'administration, toute la hiérarchie des services qui se rapportaient au prince ou à la maison du prince." Wallon, Hist. de l'Esclavage dans l'Antiquité, tom. III. p. 127.

[17] Cod. Theod., lib. XII. tit. I. 22.

[18] Ib., lib. VI. tit. XXXV. 1 *et seq.*

[19] "Negotiantes, vestiarios, linteones, purpurarios et particarios, qui devotioni nostræ deserviunt, visum est secundum veterem consultudinem ab omni munere immunes esse." Cod. Just., lib. X. tit. XLVII. 7.

servant to his master, the greater seemed to be his station.

Side by side with the new officers stood the old. The names of Senators and Consuls, Prætors and Quæstors were still repeated. Those who bore them were still honored. The more numerous the titles of the officers, the more glorious appeared the government which they served. Even the appellation of Patricians was preserved. But the reality was lost. The Patrician was no longer the master. The Quæstors, Prætors, Consuls and Senators were no longer rulers; they were barely magistrates. To provide the subject with a festival, or to serve the sovereign with an act of homage, formed the chief functions of those clothed with the honors of former times.[20]

Such were the civil officers of the government. At the head of the military officers were the Masters of the Soldiery already mentioned. At first but two in number, one for the cavalry, one for the infantry of the imperial army, they were afterwards increased to four and then to eight. Under them was a long line of subalterns, whose titles were much the same as those of the earlier commanders. Neither they nor the troops beneath them retained a shadow of the sway once exercised by the imperial soldiery. There is an account of an interview between Constantine and his veterans at one of the camps not far removed from the northern battle-grounds.

[20] The Consuls had been assuming a nobler office than that which was held in the days of old. "Officium Consulis," says Ulpian, "est consilium præbere manumittere volentibus." Ap. Digest., lib. 1. tit. x. 1.

Thronging about him, the men cry out, "O Constantine Augustus, why have we been declared veterans, if we are not to enjoy their privileges?" "Far from diminishing," replies the Emperor, "I am more and more bound to increase the welfare of my fellow-veterans." "But," says one of the band, "we are not everywhere to be laden with duties and burdens." "Speak more openly," observes Constantine, "what are these burdens improperly harassing you?" At this a shout goes up, "See to them yourself!" The result of the colloquy appears in a statute declaring that "no veteran was to be held to any civil duty, whether about the public works or about the public imposts."[21] This immunity was all that the soldier was to claim. He was not to aim, as the imperial trooper had once done, at authority in the Empire.[22]

The Masters of the Soldiery themselves ranked no higher than the Præfects, no higher even than the Consuls or the Patricians. All these, together with the superior attendants, were styled Illustrious. The other officers of the government were known as Respectable or as Honorable.[23] But there was no end to the epithets lavished upon the imperial functionaries. There were Sincerities, Capacities, Wisdoms, Magnitudes, Magnificences, Eminences and Sublimities.[24]

[21] Cod. Theod., lib. VII. tit. XX. 2.

[22] The laws against insubordination begin to look as if they were put into effect. Cod. Theod., lib. VII. tit. I. 1, tit. XII. 1.

[23] Illustres, Spectabiles, Clarissimi. Gibbon, Decline and Fall, ch. XVII.

[24] On all these titles and offices, see the references in note 14, together with Zos., II. 32, 33; Lydus, De Magist. Rom., II. 17 *et seq.*, III. 31 *et seq.*; and Bridges, Rom. Empire under Constantine, ch. 5.

Turning from the officers to the subjects of the imperial government, we encounter the classes released from public services. Amongst these were the sacerdotal orders. The professional ranks shared the immunities of the priesthoods. "Physicians, rhetoricians, and all professors of learning," runs one of the statutes, "are hereby freed from charge."[25] This freedom, declares another enactment, is "from all public obligations, from being impressed into service, as from being obliged to provide open quarters, in short, from being held to any service."[26]

Such as were held to service constituted the supporters of the government. To fulfil their various duties, they were enrolled in corporations, of which the forms and the functions were ordered as strictly as was required by the interests of the Empire.

The great prop of the imperial administration was the municipal institution of the Curia. Of this body the members, entitled Curials or Decurions, were the opulent inhabitants of every town or district where such inhabitants remained.[27] To these were assigned charges originally of a local character. The celebration of the great festivals was one of their first duties. Another was the provision of quarters for the troops. A more important service was rendered in maintaining the public peace. The later obligation of the Curials was to serve as the assessors and collectors of the imperial taxes. This it was which gave them

[25] Cod. Theod., lib. XIII. tit. III. 1, 2, 3.

[26] "Ab omnibus muneribus publicis vacare præcipimus, nec ad militiam comprehendi, neque hospites recipere, nec ullo fungi munere." Ib., lib. XIII. tit. III. 3.

[27] "Le corps de tous les citoyens aisés." Guizot, Essais sur l'Hist. de France, p. 17.

the foremost place amongst the supporters of the government.

Large as was the territory upon which the taxes were to be laid, and enormous as were the taxes themselves, the system of taxation was both simple and secure. The amount being determined by the sovereign or by his officers, it was divided into assessments upon the municipal bodies throughout the Empire. Under their direction the taxes were laid on individuals from whom it was the office of the Curia to collect the returns. Difficulties inevitable in the collection of tribute from a people harassed by invasions, seditions and continual calamities, led to the imposition of a more onerous charge upon the Curia. Its members, jointly and severally, were declared responsible for the taxes which they had hitherto been obliged merely to assess and to gather in as best they could. Henceforth, the contributions which any tax-payers failed to make were supplied by the Curials; or if a deficiency occurred amongst themselves, they were bound to discharge the arrears of their colleagues. The object of imposing this responsibility upon the members of the Curia was not to lighten the trials of their fellow-subjects, but to meet the constantly recurring demands of their sovereign.

Next to the Curia came the various trading corporations, as they may be termed. The most important was the Society of Navicularians, or Shippers, whose office it had long been to transport the corn of the provinces to the capital. It does not appear that the corporation was originally held responsible

for any further service besides the actual transportation. But as the Curials were bound to make good the revenues derived from taxation, so those derived from production were charged, to a certain degree, upon the Navicularians. The legislation of Constantine implies the obligation on their part to repair the losses that might occur upon the sea.[28] As to the individuals composing the corporation, they were of large means but of various ranks. Constantine declared them all Knights.[29]

The supplies furnished by the Navicularians passed into the hands of the Pistores, or Bakers. Another society, that of the Suarians, or Providers of Pork, may be mentioned in illustration of the extent to which the system of corporations was carried.[30] The variety of them was very great. But they were held to the utmost uniformity of obligation. Each body had its charge. Each contributed its property or its labor to support the government.

The obligations of the supporting classes were the more onerous in that there was little to be obtained from the subjects at large. The greater number of these consisted of slaves. There was but a scanty population of freemen, as they were called, throughout the provinces. More numerous bodies of the same rank were gathered in the cities, especially in the capitals. But what could these do for the government? What could they do for themselves? In-

[28] Cod. Theod., lib. XIII. tit. v. 1 *et seq.*

[29] Ib., ib., 16.

[30] The Suarians had assumed a fresh importance since largesses had been given in pork. Vopisc., Aur., 35.

stead of their sustaining the government, the government was obliged to sustain them. Each of the capitals had its mass of proletaries clamorous for the bounties of their sovereign. Such as did not depend on him for food relied on him for the amusement of which they thought even more than of subsistence. To satisfy these dependents with shows and largesses had long been one of the great objects for which every successive Emperor appeared to reign. For all this there was no other return to be demanded or to be made except the submission of those subsisting upon the imperial largesses.

Submission was the same with all classes. With all there was the same helpless dependence upon the lot in which they were placed. The subjects as a mass could not rise above their subjection. The proletary of the capital, the peasant of the country, the bondman of the family or of the state, were all confined to the condition in which they found themselves.

It was so with the members of the different corporations. "It has decreased too much," declared Constantine with reference to the corporation of the Suarians. "Wherefore let it come forth at Rome to give an account of those who have been excused and of those who are still doing their duty. . . . . For we allow no man to abandon the office which he hath here held. Wherefore we command those who have risen to posts of honor, as well as those who have escaped by any artifice whatsoever, now to be recalled. The corporation must be filled under the eyes and in the hearing of the Roman people.

And we are to be informed of these proceedings, that we may ourselves proceed against those who have been guilty of tergiversation."[31] "Let it be told them all," proclaims the Emperor, in relation to the Pistores, "that if any one thinks he can transfer his property to another, in order to assert his incompetency to carry on his charge, his device will avail him nothing."[32] Neither could the Navicularian part with the possessions that made him competent to discharge his duties.[33] Not a member of his corporation was to be released from his troublesome position.[34] To keep him the more securely fixed, he was released from all other service not only to the sovereign but to his fellow-subjects.[35]

The Curials were still more closely bound. The moment that the young heir reached the proper age,[36] he was impressed into the Curia. The same fate attended the elder subject whose exertions or whose artifices had been crowned with wealth.[37] It mattered nothing whether a man had made or had inherited his riches. In either case, they were best employed in making up the arrears of the taxpayers.[38] Once enrolled amongst the Curials,[39] the

[31] Cod. Theod., lib. XIV. tit. IV. 1.

[32] Ib., lib. XIV. tit. III. 1.

[33] Ib., lib. XIII. tit. VI. 1.

[34] Ib., lib. XIII. tit. V. 3.

[35] Ib., lib. XIII. tit. V. 5, 7.

[36] "Decimum et octavum annum ætatis ingressus." Ib., lib. XII. tit. I. 19.

[37] "Birth or property gave an inchoate title." Hallam's Supplemental Notes, p. 153. "Ex genere" or "Per originem obnoxii" are phrases in the code relating to those who succeeded by birth. "Nominati" applies to those who became Curials by virtue of their property. Cod. Theod., lib. XII. tit. I. 10, 13.

[38] Were there no heirs to the property of a Curial it went to the Curia. Ib., lib. V. tit. II. 1. A similar rule was observed with regard to the property of Navicularians and other incorporated subjects. Cod. Just., lib. VI. tit. LXII. 1 *et seq.*

[39] On the different forms of the Curia, especially of its magistra-

adventurer and the heir, the young and the old, were doomed to serve both as the victims and the instruments of imperial extortion.

Nothing could be baser than the injuries inflicted by the Curia in forcing the classes beneath its authority to pay the tribute demanded at the capital. Nothing could be more abject than the submission of the Curia to the injuries inflicted upon its own members. In vain would the Curial renounce his property. In vain would he abjure his rank. In vain would he fly his home.[40] Some stained their hands in crime, in order to meet the punishment which they regarded as a preferable alternative to their daily miseries.[41] It was equally fruitless. The Curial, pronounced the law of a later reign, was as much in bondage as the debtor or the slave.[42]

Undoubtedly a large proportion of Constantine's Curials consisted of Christians. From the moment that he invested the clergy with exemption from all public services, a rush amongst the laity into the sacerdotal ranks appears to have occurred. Was there any class which the Emperor would have allowed to escape from the Curias, it was that of his Christian subjects. But Constantine had no mind to part with the best supporters of his government. No sooner did he discover the effects of his decree in favor of the clergy than he issued a second one to qualify the first. In this he forbade any Decurion or any son of a Decurion, or even any one possessed

cies in different provinces, see Savigny's Hist. Rom. Law in the Middle Ages, ch. II. § 9 *et seq.*

[40] Cod. Theod., lib. XII. tit. I. 12, 16.

[41] Ib., lib. IX. tit. XIX. 1.

[42] Ib., lib. IX. tit. XLV. 3.

of the suitable resources and capacities for bearing the public burdens, to seek refuge from his responsibility under the clerical name or office. "Let the places of deceased clergymen," orders the Emperor, "be given to those who are mean in fortune and bound to no civil duties. . . . . And we command that, while these are freed from all trouble, those who have fled from their responsibilities into the clerical ranks shall be instantly brought back to their proper positions in the Curia and to their civil obligations therein."[43] "The rich," declares a later edict, "must supply the wants of the state. The poor alone should be supported upon the revenues of the churches."[44]

So with the property administered by the clergy. "Let every one," ran the law, "have permission to leave any part of his possessions to the holy and venerable Catholic body. Nor let his wishes be annulled."[45] But did the bequest consist of Curial or corporate property, it continued subject to its previous burdens.[46] Did it consist of land or of other possessions, not strictly belonging to the corporation or to the Curia, it was obliged to pay the same duty or the same tax that had been levied upon it in the hands of its former proprietor.[47] The clergy or the Church held no possessions without the obligation to pay the ordinary imposts. All that rendered ecclesi-

[43] Cod. Theod., lib. XVI. tit. II. 3.

[44] "Opulentos enim sæculi subire necessitates oportet, pauperes ecclesiarum divitiis sustentari." Ib., ib., 6.

[45] Cod. Theod., lib. XVI. tit. II. 4.

[46] The citation from Augustine in Bingham's Christian Antiquities (book V. ch. III. § 5) is conclusive.

[47] There is nothing in the law of the Theodosian Code (lib. XI. tit. I. 1) to demonstrate that the Church paid no tax upon real property.

astical property more secure than any other property, was its freedom from the extraordinary tributes, as they were styled, by which the imperial finances were frequently replenished.

To return to the Curials. There was another class besides the Christians to whom Constantine might be expected to show peculiar favor. But whatever he was willing to do for his soldiers, he showed no mercy to those whom he considered bound to service in the Curias. "Such," he enacts, "as have abandoned their Curias for military life must be at once discharged, in order that they may return each to his own Curia."[48] "And let all," declares a subsequent statute, "be recalled from service, not only those belonging to the Curia by birth, but also those possessing the property adequate to its duties."[49] Even the sons of the peculiarly favored veterans were to assume their charge as Curials if they did not take their father's places in the legions.[50] The burdens, not the immunities, of the parent were what the children inherited. The wants of his treasury weighed more with Constantine than those of his subjects, whether citizens or soldiers.

Such was the subjection of those supporting the government. It was the same with its officers. The soldier could not lay aside his arms. The sons of those in service were bound to enlist with their fathers, as well as after them.[51] The civil officers

[48] Cod. Theod., lib. XII. tit. I. 11.

[49] "Non solum si originalis sit, sed et si substantiam muneribus aptam possidens." Ib., ib., 13.

[50] Ib., lib. VII. tit. XXII. 1 *et seq.*

[51] Ib., lib. VII. tit. XXII. 3.

were equally bound.[52] The highest as well as the lowest were required to preserve their offices until it was the pleasure of their sovereign that they should retire. If their posts were such as to require peculiar training or peculiar fortune, then their sons were obliged to succeed them.[53] In short, the functions of the officers were as servile[54] as those of the supporters of the imperial government.

Was this the system of a Christian sovereign? Had the faith of the ruler been changed only to transform the Roman into an Oriental Empire?[55] The transformation, it is true, had not begun under Constantine. His system was that of his immediate predecessors. But he had perfected it. He had stamped it as the system by which the imperial power was to be upheld. Was there no fairer aspect of his Empire?

No part of Constantine's policy was more prominent than his system of taxation. None was more onerous for his subjects to bear. We have seen as much in tracing the relations of the supporting classes to the government. We might see more of its oppressive effects by a survey of the different imposts that were laid. No rank, no individual that could contribute anything was spared. Taxes on persons were not sufficient. There must be taxes on things. Taxes on property were not enough.

[52] Cod. Theod., lib. VIII. tit. IV. 3 *et seq.*

[53] Ib., lib. VI. tit. II. *et seq.*

[54] "Una catena di servili uffizi." Romagnosi, Dell' Incivilimento, Parte II., cap. II. § 2.

[55] "Pour venir au régime des castes de l'Orient." Wallon, Hist. de l'Escl. dans l'Ant., tom. III. p. 220.

There must be taxes on labor.[56] In addition to these, a varied revenue was drawn from all the customs, works, and lands in the possession of the government.[57] "He was an admirable ruler for ten years," says the imperial chronicler of Constantine, "but for the next twelve he was a robber, and for the last ten a prodigal."[58]

Yet there may be something to lighten these gloomy colors. Constantine might have had no thought of retrenching his vast expenditures. But it seems to have been his intention, as far as he could carry it out without any sacrifices on his own part, to protect the main body from whom his resources were primarily obtained. Various enactments were made against undue extortion on the part of those entrusted with the collection of the revenues. The penalty of death was attached to many of the abuses from which the contributing classes had suffered for ages.[59] Indeed, the number of Constantine's ordinances in relation to the misdeeds of his officers exceeds the number of his statutes respecting the liabilities of his subjects at large.[60] "Whoever," runs one of his earlier edicts, "shall be found guilty

[56] This was the χρυσάργυρος. Evagrius (III. 39) refutes the charge of Zosimus (II. 38) against Constantine as having been the first to lay this tax upon licentious pursuits.

[57] Zosimus (as above) gives a sad account of the imperial exactions.

[58] Aur. Vict., Epit., XLI. 16.

[59] Cod. Theod., lib. II. tit. XXX. 1. Lib. IV. tit. XII. 1. Lib. X. tit. IV. 1.

[60] "Quand on parcourt le code Théodosien, ... on comprend que les législateurs avaient autant à faire pour contenir les inspecteurs et les juges que pour obtenir l'obéissance des justiciables." Naudet, Des Secours Publics chez les Romains, Mém. de l'Institut, Ac. Insc. et B. Lett., tom. XIII. p. 63.

of crime, must be punished according to the laws, however illustrious in rank he may be. . . . . Guilt supersedes all rank," [61] adds the Emperor in language worthy of a Christian sovereign. Equally striking is the prohibition addressed to the imperial assessors against "transferring the burdens of the rich to the poor." [62] The condition of the tax-payers grew easier under such treatment. Too severely racked during earlier reigns to bear with any aggravated exactions, they obtained a skilful ruler in Constantine. Without sparing them where they were able, he spared them where they were unable to increase his revenues. [63] For any deficiency that might arise, he looked to the richer orders, to the corporations, as to the members of the Curia.

All classes of contributors, however, found nominal protection under an authority supposed to have assumed its full proportions at the present period. It had long been an element in the Roman policy to provide the provinces with advocates by whom their claims at particular emergencies could be presented at the imperial tribunals. [64] With the growth of oppression, the advantage of leaving some sort of opening by which the subject could bring his grievances before the superior authorities became more apparent.

[61] "Omnem enim honorem reatus excludit." Cod. Theod., lib. IX. tit. I. 1. So the menaces against corrupt judges and advocates. Ib., lib. I. tit. XIX. 1. Lib. II. tit. X. 1 *et seq.* Lib. X. tit. XV. 1 *et seq.*

[62] Ib., lib. XIII. tit. X. 1.

[63] "Si provincialium nostrorum querela de conductorum aviditate extiterit et probatum fuerit, ultra antiquam consuetudinem et nostræ terminos jussionis aliquid eos profligasse, rei tanti criminis perpetuo exilio puniantur." Cod. Just., lib. IV. tit. LXII. 4.

[64] Pliny describes the Ecdicus Amisenorum Civitatis. Ep., X. 111.

The temporary charge of the advocate was enlarged into a permanent office, with the title of Defender of the City or of the District.[65] To this post the Curials were especially declared ineligible,[66] nor were their votes alone taken in the election of a Defender. Chosen by the whole body of inhabitants from "suitable ranks," the Defender was charged for five years with guarding "both the Decurions and the people against all violence and wrong."[67]

But it was the people rather than the Decurions, the lower rather than the higher classes, whom the Defenders were to protect. "You are," declares the edict of later sovereigns, addressing a certain Defender, "you are to act the part of a parent especially to the common people. You are not to suffer the inhabitants either of the country or of the town to be molested by demands. You are to stand up against the insolence of officials and the caprice of judges. You are to have free access, whenever you desire it, to the judge of your district, in order to obtain redress from such as abuse those whom you are to hold in the place of children. Nor are you to suffer aught beyond the usual contribution to be exacted from men, who, it is certain, can never be redressed except by such prevention."[68] "Let not the Defenders fail of being what they are said to be," is the injunction of a still later decree.[69] If

[65] Defensor Civitatis, Loci.

[66] "Non ex Decurionum . . . . . corpore, sed ex aliis idoneis personis." Cod. Just., lib. I. tit. LV. 2. This was a law of 365.

[67] From a law of 392. Cod. Just., as above, 5, or Cod. Theod., lib. I. tit. XX. 2.

[68] Cod. Just., lib. I. tit. LV. 4. Issued in 385.

[69] "Id quod esse dicuntur esse non desinant." Ib., ib., 5, or

the injunction was obeyed, the great body of taxpayers was comparatively protected.

The provincial Convention, had it been regularly held, would have served the purpose of protection much more effectually than the solitary Defender. Wherever a Convention was actually called, it appears to have been composed, on the one part, of the imperial functionaries connected with the province, and, on the other, of the Curials and the other ranks to whom the demands of the sovereign would be principally addressed.[70] But there is no evidence that such assemblies were summoned at stated seasons or under stated regulations. The very name of convention was more frequently applied to local courts than to assemblies in which the affairs of an entire province were brought before its representatives as well as its rulers.

To all the contributing classes one common privilege, such as it was, belonged. Whatever might be the injustice from which they suffered, they could appeal from its perpetrator to his sovereign and to theirs. "It is the duty of authority," declares Constantine, near the beginning of his reign, "to receive all appeals of every sort that may have been presented according to the appointed forms."[71] "If there be any one," he afterwards proclaims, "of any place, rank or station, believing himself capable of clearly and manifestly proving against any one of

Cod. Theod., lib. I. tit. xx. 2. To these functions others of a judicial nature were afterwards added.

[70] See the edict of Honorius nearly a century later, in relation to a convention of Gaul, ap. Sirmond, Op. Var., tom. I. p. 759, note.

[71] Cod. Theod., lib. XI. tit. xxx. 4.

my judges, counts, friends, or attendants, aught that shall seem to have been done dishonestly or unjustly, let him draw nigh, fearlessly and confidently; let him bring the case before me. I myself will hear all, I myself will examine all, and, if the charges be proved, I will avenge myself. ..... Him who shall have made such accusation and sustained it, I will reward both with honors and possessions." [72] Such appeals would often prove of advantage to him by whom they were made. They would prove of equal advantage to him by whom they were received. Not an officer, not a supporter, not a subject of the government, but must have felt himself under the eye of the sovereign. [73]

Nor was Constantine unmindful of his feebler subjects. Such as were arraigned at the tribunals found defence against unjust accusers and oppressive judges. [74] "Let no one," commands the Emperor, "dread the prison, or the scourge, or the other tortures to which debtors have heretofore been condemned. The prison is for criminals, for guilty individuals or guilty magistrates, for those judges who shall inflict penalties in contradiction to the

[72] "Si quis est cujuscunque loci, ordinis, dignitatis, qui se in quemcunque judicum, comitorum, amicorum vel Palatinorum meorum aliquid veraciter et manifeste probare posse confidit, quod non integre atque juste gessisse videatur, intrepidus et securus adeat; interpellet me, ipse audiam omnia, ipse cognoscam; et si fuerit comprobatum, ipse me vindicabo. ..... Illum autem qui hoc prodiderit et comprobaverit et dignitatibus et rebus augebo. Ita mihi Summa Divinitas semper propitia sit et me incolumem præstet, ut cupio, felicissima et florente Republica." Cod. Theod., lib. IX. tit. I. 4.

[73] Only from the Prætorian Præfects was there to be no appeal, "lest the veneration due to ourselves shall seem to be violated." Ib., lib. XI. tit. XXX. 16.

[74] Ib., lib. I. tit. XVI. 7; lib. II. tit. IV. 1, 2, tit. X. 3, 4.

present statute."[75] The terrors of the prison itself were not unassuaged. Whoever might be the prisoner, he was "not to be shut up in darkness, nor left to perish under the sufferings of imprisonment."[76] No capital sentence was to be pronounced until the accused should be so plainly proved guilty "as hardly to be able to deny the deeds that he had committed."[77] The care for the criminal, the prisoner and the debtor was extended to the bondman. His family could not be separated by its owner.[78] The very lowest order of slaves did not go disregarded. "Spectacles of blood," orders the Emperor, "are not suited to public tranquillity or to domestic peace. We forbid the use of gladiators. And let those usually adjudged to this condition be sentenced to the mines for the future, that they may suffer for their crimes without any further bloodshed.[79]

The imperial legislator respects the rights of women. They, as well as men, were relieved from the penalties of celibacy. "The restraints imposed, like yokes upon their necks, are hereby," declared the law, "removed from them all."[80] The matron assumed a higher place. Her property was secured to her children against the avarice or negligence of the father.[81] The female ward was as carefully

[75] Cod. Theod., lib. XI. tit. VII. 3.
[76] Ib., lib. IX. tit. III. 1, 2.
[77] Ib., lib. IX. tit. XL. 1.
[78] Ib., lib. II. tit. XXV. 1. But the so-called rights of the master remain in great force. Ib., lib. IX. tit. XII. 1, 2. Cod. Just., lib. VI. tit. I. 3 *et seq.*
[79] Cod. Theod., lib. XV. tit. XII. 1. This was in 325. But the use of gladiators continued long afterwards.
[80] Ib., lib. VIII. tit. XVI. 1.
[81] Ib., lib. VIII. tit. XVIII. 1–3.

protected as the male.[82] Both might appeal to the sovereign for the privilege of anticipating the time of their majority. "And women," proclaimed the law, "may have the same rights with men in all business affairs."[83]

Much the most touching proof of the good influences to which Constantine occasionally yielded appears in the laws protecting destitute children. It had often been an object with preceding sovereigns to rescue the offspring of the poor from the misery to which they were exposed by the cruelty as well as by the poverty of their parents. But the relief had been temporary or partial, until Constantine made it both permanent and universal. Any child whom its parents declared themselves unable to support was to be educated at the expense of the Emperor. "For it is against our will," declares Constantine, "that any one should perish or be driven to crime for want of food."[84] "If orphans," repeats the sovereign, "or widows, or any rendered helpless by disease or by fortune, beseech our interposition against those who are more powerful than themselves, let the parties complained of be sent to us, that we may do justice."[85]

To crown these better measures, Constantine issued an edict securing all who could be called free-born in possession of personal liberty. "If any one," he proclaims, "asserts his claim to another,

[82] Cod. Theod., lib. II. tit. XVI. 1, 2; lib. III. tit. XXX. 1 *et seq.*; lib. IV. tit. VIII. 6.

[83] Ib., lib. II. tit. XVII. 1.

[84] Ib., lib. XII. tit. XXVII. 1. So 2. Other edicts protecting the poor are in lib. V. tit. VII. 1, and tit. VIII. 1.

[85] Ib., lib. I. tit. XIX. 2.

let him who is seized be led into the presence of the people in order to obtain a champion. If no champion shall appear, then let him be delivered to the claimant. But if a champion shall afterwards be found, let the cause come up anew. And if the person seized shall make good his right to freedom, let the person seizing make amends to the amount of his own value had he been proved a slave."[86] To this law many and many a subject of Constantine and of succeeding sovereigns may have owed the preservation of his few remaining rights.

Such was the brighter side of the Empire. Its Emperor could not assume even the name of a Christian without making concessions to liberty such as no one amongst his Heathen predecessors had done. "He was an innovator," exclaimed his Heathen successor, "he was a violator of the ancient laws, a violator of the standard received of old."[87] "Of custom," quoth Constantine himself, "and of long established principle, the authority is not slight. But it must not be urged so far," added the Christian sovereign, "as to prevail against either reason or justice."[88] Such words from such a source were proofs that the centralization of the past was yielding, at least on some points, to the liberty of the future.

[86] This is but a summary of the fifth law in Cod. Theod., lib. IV. tit. VIII.

[87] Amm. Marc., XXI. 10. The Heathen successor was Julian. The language of the times was :— "Restitutori publicæ libertatis. Defensori urbis Romæ. Communis omnium salutis auctori. Domino nostro Imperatori Flavio Valerio Constantino. Pio. Felici. Invicto. Semper Augusto." Orelli, Inscript. Lat. Sel., 1084. Also 1089.

[88] Cod. Just., lib. VIII. tit. LIII. 2.

CHAPTER XV.

CHRISTIANS IN POWER.

"Against our peace we arm our will." — PRIOR.

ALONE of all the subjects of Constantine, the Christians were on the rise. It seemed to have been for them that the places held by the powerful orders of former reigns were vacated. The courtiers had declined. The soldiers had fallen. In their stead, the Christians appeared to be ascending to power.

The day on which they were wont to assemble in obscurity was declared sacred. "Let all judges," enacted Constantine, "all townspeople, all tradesmen cease from labor on the venerable Sun's day. They, however, who are engaged in the cultivation of the soil may freely pursue their work; inasmuch as it will frequently happen that, in consequence of favorable weather granted by Celestial Providence, sowing or planting can be done to greater advantage on the above-named day."[1] "It seemed especially shameful," repeated the Emperor, "that the Sun's day, so celebrated for its venerable character,

[1] Cod. Just., lib. III. tit. XII. 3. This was in 321.

should be passed in brawls or legal controversies."[2] The Sun's day of the legislator was the Lord's day of those for whom he issued the laws concerning it. No longer would the Christians gather in the midst of clamor and toil along the thoroughfares. No longer would their worship be disturbed by the dealings of the market-place or the proceedings of the tribunal. When they met, the Heathen were to look on in silence, if not in reverence. There could be no clearer sign of the power to which the Christians were attaining.

We have a token of the liberty accompanying the power of the Christians. In prohibiting legal proceedings upon the new holiday, Constantine makes one exception. "We will have no controversies," he orders, "but it is both agreeable and becoming that things which are especially festal should be done on that day. Wherefore let all have the privilege of emancipating and manumitting their slaves on the sacred festival, and let no obstacle be laid to business of this nature."[3] Several years before,[4] Constantine had authorized masters to liberate their slaves in presence of any Christian congregation. The Christian priest was at the same time empowered to make the record hitherto made by the civil magistrate alone. Subsequent enactments confirmed the aspect thus imparted to the ceremony of manumission.[5] In the church or the chamber crowded with Christian worshippers, the slave was pronounced

[2] Cod. Theod., lib. II. tit. VIII. 1.

[3] Ib., ib.

[4] "Jamdudum." Cod. Just., lib. I. tit. XIII. 1.

[5] Ib., ib., 1, 2.

free. The heart that had been lifted up in prayer to God throbbed with the sense of independence amongst men. Of if the liberated bondman was a Heathen, he remembered, perhaps resought, the Christian assembly as the scene of his deliverance. Others, witnessing the ceremony, considered it a part of the Christian service to declare the slave free under human, as well as under Divine law. Another imperial edict raises the slaves manumitted "in the bosom of the Church" to the highest class of freedmen. "Let them be known," declares Constantine, "to have obtained the rights usually included in Roman citizenship."[6]

"I desire," wrote Constantine to his Eastern subjects soon after his authority was extended over them, "I desire you to live at peace and in submission for the sake of the whole world and the advantage of all mankind. They who are in error," that is, the unbelievers, "are to enjoy the same security as the believers. And this very restoration of intercourse or of equality will prove the easiest avenue to the truth."[7] Nothing could be truer or wiser than the directions of the Emperor. But the Christians could not attain to power without disturbing the equality between them and those differing from them. We shall find but few proofs of liberty attending upon their elevation. It will rather detract from the liberty of others while it will add little or nothing to their own.

[6] Cod. Theod., lib. IV. tit. VII. 1. Wallon (Hist. de l'Escl. dans l'Ant., Pte III. ch. X.) gives an account of the modifications of the imperial laws with regard to slaves under the influence of Christianity.

[7] Ap. Eus., Vit. Const., II. 56.

They were elevated, it must be recollected, not so much by themselves as by their sovereign. It was he who declared their holy day a day to be observed throughout the Empire. It was he who ordered the form by which they were to set the slave free. They had raised themselves, to a certain degree, from subjection. But they could not raise themselves to authority. Dependence upon the ruler might increase their power. It would hardly augment their liberty.

The liberty of their adversaries would be diminished. Constantine began by forbidding the Heathen to interfere with the Christians.[8] He went on to interfere with the Heathen. At first, he forbade private sacrifices.[9] "We do not," he says, "prohibit the ceremonies of their bygone creed to be observed in open day."[10] But the reservation seems to have been gradually withdrawn.[11] Some of the Heathen temples particularly polluted by licentious or superstitious rites were ordered to be demolished.[12]

The Jews were the next to be visited with the imperial censure. Scattered as they were, Constantine beheld them everywhere united in obedience to the Patriarchs, Princes or Rabbis, whose power had arisen from the ruins of their ancient institutions. One of the Christian councils held about the time of Constantine's accession solemnly prohibited "the

[8] Cod. Theod., lib. xvi. tit. ii. 5.

[9] Ib., lib. ix. tit. xvi. 1–3; lib. xvi. tit. x. 1.

[10] Ib., lib. ix. tit. xvi. 2.

[11] See Eus., Vit. Const., ii. 44, 45; iv. 10, 23, 25. Id., De Laud. Const., 8.

[12] Eus., Vit. Const., iii. 55–58. Hier., Chron., Ad Ann. 332.

clergy and the laity from eating with the Jews."[13] The spirit indicated by the prohibition was that which Constantine found prevalent amongst his Christian subjects. "We wish," he announced at an early period, "we wish all Jews with their Elders and Patriarchs to be aware that any one daring to use the violence which, as we are informed, is now employed against the fugitives from that dangerous sect to the worship of the Deity, shall be given to the flames, and burned with all his accomplices. And any one joining this nefarious sect, or taking part in its assemblies, shall pay the same penalties with them."[14] Twenty years afterwards, the Emperor issued two edicts in corroboration of his earlier decree. One forbids the convert from Judaism to be ill-treated by his former associates.[15] The other takes away the last hope of making converts that the Jews could have had, by forbidding them to circumcise their Christian or Heathen bondmen. "Such shall by no means be held in bondage," declares the law, "but shall obtain the privileges of freedom."[16] The rumor of an attempt on the part of the Jews to recover Jerusalem provoked severer measures against them. Dreadful were the barbarities inflicted upon those engaged in the hopeless enterprise.[17]

While the Jews and the Heathen were thus sink-

[13] Conc. Elib., c. 50, ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. IV. p. 268.

[14] Cod. Theod., lib. XVI. tit. VIII. 1.

[15] In 336. Ib., ib., 5.

[16] Ib., lib. XVI. tit. IX. 1. A law published soon after Constantine's death by his son forbids the Jews even to hold a slave of contrary faith, and declares the circumcision of such an one to be a capital crime. Ib., ib., 2.

[17] Chrysost., Hom. V. Adv. Judæos.

ing, the Christians were rising. But not all of them. "The privileges granted on religious grounds," proclaimed the Emperor, "are to be conferred only upon the followers of the Catholic law. It is our pleasure," he added, "that Heretics and Schismatics be not merely debarred from the aforesaid privileges, but, furthermore, bound and subjected to divers charges."[18] That they should be prohibited from worshipping where or how they pleased, did not immediately occur to their imperious sovereign.[19] But excited by the controversies in which he was taking part, he broke out more violently against the Heretical Christians. "Hear ye now," thus opens an edict, "O ye Novatians, Valentinians, Marcionites, and Montanists! Hear ye all who have embraced heresies of your own! . . . . O ye enemies of truth, ye adversaries of life, ye counsellors of destruction! . . . . Inasmuch as it is no longer possible to endure the pest of your destructiveness, we make proclamation by this edict that no one of you venture to take part in your wonted assemblies. To this end we command all your edifices wherein ye hold your meetings to be confiscated. And this determination of ours proceeds to such a length, that we forbid not only your public assemblages, but your private gatherings, whether they be in houses or in any other places in your possession. . . . . As many of you as seek a true and a spiritual worship, do ye come

[18] Cod. Theod., lib. xvi. tit. v. 1.

[19] Ib., ib., 2. The appointment of a commissioner to inquire into the "superstitionum sectas, Manichæorum et similium" indicates some sort of toleration. Amm. Marc., xv. 13.

to the Catholic Church and obtain communion with its holiness. . . . . And to the Catholic Church we have directed your chapels, if chapels they can be called, to be delivered without delay. All other places to you belonging, we have commanded to be appropriated to the public treasury, in order that not a single opportunity of meeting together may remain to you."[20] The ancient writers assert that the Heretical leaders, borne down by the edict of Constantine, died without leaving disciples or successors.[21]

Not the Christians, therefore, but the Catholic Christians, were they who rose to power with the favor of Constantine. If it was inevitable that a portion of the believers should be elevated with menace and violence above the rest, there was no other portion to be preferred to the Catholics. No others had so firmly borne the brunt of persecution. Of no others had the principles or the energies been so consistently developed in the intervals of comparative prosperity. Did any Christians deserve the reward of worldly authority, they were the Catholics. Did any possess the strength to encounter the ordeal of temporal elevation, they were the Catholics.

Their relations to the sovereign have been seen. Those which they sustained towards their fellow-subjects have been remarked. It remains for us to survey their relations amongst themselves.

At their head were the Bishops of their various sees. The authority of these high personages was

[20] Ap. Eus., Vit. Const., III. 64, 65.

[21] Ib., ib., 66. Soz., II. 32.

formally recognized by the imperial government. A law empowered the Bishops of the Catholic Church to decide in ecclesiastical cases[22] without subjection to the appeal that had hitherto brought all matters under the cognizance of the sovereign. If any question pressed upon his attention, the Emperor might still claim its being laid before him. But for the affairs over which the episcopal jurisdiction ordinarily extended, he was willing to pronounce the decision of the Bishop in his ecclesiastical council to be final. Nor was this all. Should a matter suitable for the Bishop to judge come before the imperial tribunals, it could there be judged only in case of the parties agreeing that it should be. If either party preferred the sentence of the Bishop to that of the magistrate, the latter was to refrain from proceeding in the case, "even though he had begun to pronounce upon it."[23]

The possessors of the authority thus broadly recognized were prepared to use it. Before the publication of the laws just cited, the Catholic Bishops assembled at Arles had put forth a claim that must have startled many of their contemporaries. "Con-

[22] Eusebius (Vit. Const., IV. 27) and Sozomen (Hist., I. 9) represent the provisions of this statute as extending to the jurisdiction of the Bishops in civil cases. But this is premature.

[23] "Quicunque itaque litem habens, sive possessor, sive petitor erit, inter initia litis, vel decursis temporum curriculis, sive cum negotium peroratur, sive cum jam cœperit promi sententia, judicium eligit sacrosanctæ legis antistitis, illico sine aliqua dubitatione, etiamsi alia pars refragatur, ad Episcopum cum sermone litigantium dirigatur. . . . . Omnes itaque causæ, quæ vel prætorio jure vel civili tractantur, Episcoporum sententiis terminatæ, perpetuo stabilitatis jure firmentur, nec liceat ulterius retractari negotium." Hänel, who proves the genuineness of this statute, assigns it to the year 331. Cod. Theod., Suppl., pp. 445 *et ant.* See Soz., I. 9.

cerning the believers who rise to the presidencies," declares the canon, "it hath been resolved that when they are promoted they shall receive communicatory letters. So that in whatever place they may exercise their powers, they shall be under the eye of the Bishop of the place. And if they transgress the appointed discipline, they shall then be excluded from communion. The same holds good with respect to those who wish to enter upon any office."[24] All this was no less than to assert the supremacy of the Christian over the imperial functionaries. There is nothing in the legislation of Constantine which refutes the assertion.

The language of the Christians was strained in describing the majesty of their prelates. "The Bishop," says one of the earlier writers in the Apostolic Constitutions, "is the Minister of the Word, the Keeper of Knowledge, the Mediator between God and you in the several parts of your Divine worship. He is the Teacher of Piety. Next after God he is your Father, who hath begotten you again to the adoption of sons by water and the Spirit. He is your Ruler and Governor; he is your King and Potentate. Next after God, he is your earthly God, who hath a right to be honored by you. . . . . It is your duty to give and his to administer, as being the Administrator and Disposer of ecclesiastical affairs. Yet ye shall not call your Bishop to account, nor watch his administration how he performeth it, when, or to whom, or where, or whether he do it

[24] Conc. Arel., c. 7, ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. IV. p. 308.

well, or ill, or indifferently; for he hath one who will call him to account, the Lord God, who put his administration into his hands, and thought him worthy of so great a dignity."[25]

Such was the superior of every diocese. Beneath him was rank below rank of the subordinate clergy. Was he the Bishop of a great city or of an extensive district, he was the ruler of other Bishops as well as of the inferior orders of the priesthood. His distinction in such a case was described by the new titles of Primate or Metropolitan; while the prelates of his province were entitled either Bishops or Chor-episcopi, that is, Country-Bishops.[26] Next to the Bishop, and appointed by him, was his assistant, the Archdeacon, whose office it was to take part with his superior in conducting the services and in administrating the affairs of the see.[27] Under him were the Priests and Deacons, together with the more recent orders, amongst which the remaining members of the clergy were distributed.[28] The more numerous the churches,[29] or the more ostentatious the ceremonies of the Christians, the more marked were these distinctions. The more majestic, therefore, became the position of the higher prelates.

The elevation of these above the main body of the clergy was not more remarkable than that of the clergy above the main body of the laity. Nor did

[25] Apost. Const., II. 26, 35, Dr. Chase's translation.

——"Make Christians kings
That thirst so much for principality."
CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.

[26] On the various episcopal titles of the times, see Bingham's Christ. Antiq., book II. ch. 2.

[27] Ib., book II. ch. 21.

[28] Ib., book III. ch. 1 *et seq.*

[29] On the churches in Rome at this time, see Anast., De Vit. Pont. Rom., 34.

the laity stand upon a common ground. Lines of division were drawn amongst them even where they would naturally be the most united. But one portion of them, the baptized, or the Faithful, as they were styled, could join in all the services of the sanctuary. The Catechumens, or candidates for baptism, took part only in the penitential prayers preceding the administration of the hallowed rites from which they were excluded.[30] Nor were all the Catechumens admitted to the prayers, but only such as went by the name of Kneelers. The Hearers, as an inferior order was styled,[31] had the privilege of hearing the psalmody, the Scriptures and the sermon[32] preceding both the prayers and the more sacred ceremonies. To the earlier part of the service none were denied admission. Penitents, Heretics, Jews and Heathen could come, if they chose, to hear the chant or the lessons of the day. But beyond this their right as well as that of the unbaptized converts to unite in the Divine worship was utterly denied. Such divisions tended to increase the distance between the laity and the clergy. They had the same tendency to promote the exaltation of the superior prelates.[33]

[30] The Lord's Prayer was especially prohibited to the Catechumens as to all unbaptized. See the references in Bingham's Christ. Antiq., book I. ch. 4, § 7. 3.

[31] The two classes are very plainly distinguished in the fifth canon of the Conc. Neocæs., ap. Routh, Reliq. Sac., tom. IV. p. 182. Other distinctions were drawn. See Bingham's Christ. Antiq., book X. ch. 2, § 2-4.

[32] Which, if acceptable, it was the custom to applaud vociferously. Bingham, as above, book XIV. ch. 4, § 27, 28.

[33] The instructions to the laity at large contained in the first book of the Apostolic Constitutions sound like ridicule in contrast to the glorification of the Bishop. See the third chapter on hair and beards, or the third and the eighth chapters on female attire.

One bond of Christian union was not yet broken. Offices of protection and beneficence were discharged with an earnestness that could not have seemed sincerer.[34] "Wherefore," says the Christian orator towards the close of the century, "our fathers set the poor before the doors of the houses where they met to worship, in order that the simple sight of them might rouse the most sluggish and inhuman to the remembrance of charity. For where a crowd is gathered of the old and the infirm, of the ragged, the unwashed and the squalid, of men who carry staves and yet are unable to support themselves, of those whose sight is gone and whose bodies are completely crippled, who is so strong, who so adamantine in heart as to resist the appeal to his sympathy?"[35] Through such a throng the worshipper made his way into the house of prayer. With such he knelt and adored. Through such again he came forth when the services were ended. Proud as might be the state of the Bishop, he had spoken of the lowly as of his brethren. Assuming as might be the vestments or the attitudes of the priests, they had ministered to the humble as to their brethren. High as might be the station of the laymen, the very Faithful would join in the devotions of the degraded as in those of their brethren. The union of the lowest and the highest, through all the separations of the ecclesiastical system, was thus preserved.

Though this had not been inculcated as a matter

[34] Apost. Const., IV. 1–3, 5.

[35] Chrysost., De Verb. Apost. alt. "Habentes eundem Spiritum." Hom. III. tom. III. p. 345, ed. Paris.

of duty, it would have been desired as a matter of policy. It was from the lowest estate that many of the prelates had risen to power. Mere self-respect on their part would lead them to enjoin consideration for the class from which they sprang. Or if they avoided association with the ranks which they had left, their people would see the expediency of attention to the class that could thus impose rulers upon the Church.

Furthermore, the poor were not so severed from their prosperous brethren as it would appear. The times were such that all were more or less degraded either by sufferings or by errors. Never ceasing to be subjects, whose worldly connections were altogether at variance with their spiritual hopes, the Christian believers furnished but difficult materials for the constitution of society upon its new foundations. The canons of a council held at Elvira in Southern Spain during the early part of Constantine's reign,[36] give sombre outlines of the lives then led by many Christians. Idolatry appears to have been the temptation to which the recent converts most frequently yielded.[37] Others born in the faith are charged with all manner of crimes from false witness up to murder.[38] Women, bearing the name of believers, stand arraigned for deeds involving their excommunication for life.[39] One of the canons is

[36] The date, however, is very uncertain, varying, according to different authorities, from 250 to 325. Tillemont places it in 300. I follow the date of Onuphrius, that is, 313.

[37] C. 1–4. Ap. Routh, Reliq. Sac., tom. IV. pp. 259, 260. The older converts were sometimes guilty of the same offence. C. 59, as before, p. 270.

[38] C. 74, p. 272. C. 6, p. 260.

[39] C. 8, p. 260. C. 12, 13, p. 261.

directed against "the mistress who, excited by passion, shall so lash her handmaid as to deprive her of existence."[40] The very places where the Christians met for worship were made the scenes of excess,[41] while those who should have stood sentinels amongst them, their very teachers, are branded with the guilt of worldliness and lust.[42] Apostacy, with which some appear to have been chargeable,[43] was a less heinous offence than the transgressions committed by many continuing the profession of Christianity. The spirit of the council exposing these offences was far from being faithful to the principles which the assembled prelates were essaying to support. A tone of contempt for their inferiors runs through their canons. The murder of the slave, as mentioned above, was but slightly avenged upon the barbarous mistress. Of the other canons relating to slaves, one directs their masters to keep them from idolatry.[44] The other debars freedmen, whose former owner was still "in the world," from promotion to any rank of the clergy.[45] The elevation of the freedman and the liberation of the slave find no place in the ordinances of the council.

Was this to be in power? The Christians who thus forgot themselves could hardly be said to be in existence. To restore them to actual life and to actual authority, became the object of many earnest hearts. Some thought the supremacy of the pre-

[40] C. 5, p. 260.
[41] C. 35, p. 266.
[42] C. 18, p. 262. C. 19, 20, p. 263. C. 27, p. 264.
[43] C. 46, p. 267.
[44] C. 41, p. 267.
[45] C. 80, p. 273.

lates the cause of disorders. The prelates of Arles declared against any Bishop who should "trample upon any other Bishop."[46] Others advocated the isolation of the clergy from the vanities and the passions of the age. It was proposed to free them even from the holiest of worldly ties by forbidding their marriage.[47] Another party thought it necessary for all to escape from the corruptions that were in the Church as well as in the world. Pachomius of Egypt fled into the desert to originate the system under which monasteries were opened as places of refuge. The famous Antony, also an Egyptian, spent nearly seventy years in the ascetic practices of an anchorite.[48] An incident in his career illustrates the spirit in which men were hurrying into seclusion. A letter, it seems, was addressed by Constantine, in his name and in that of his sons, to Antony, as the most noted of those who had renounced the world. Antony, alleging his inability to make the expected acknowledgments in return, at first refused to receive the letter. At the solicitation, however, of those who shared his retirement, the anchorite opened the despatch and answered it.

[46] "Ut nullus Episcopus alium Episcopum inculcet." Conc. Arel., c. 17, ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. IV. p. 310.

[47] The tenth canon of the council of Ancyra forbids Deacons o marry without their Bishops' consent. The first canon of the Neo-Cæsarean council absolutely prohibits the marriage of Presbyters. The thirty-third canon of the council at Elvira orders "all the clergy," if already married, to "abstain from their wives." Ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. IV. pp. 120, 181, 265. According to the Apostolic Canons, the lower orders of the clergy could marry after ordination, while marriages previously contracted remained good. C. VI., XVII., XIX., XXVII. So Apost. Const., VI. 7.

[48] Pachomius died in 348, Antony in 356. See Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. VII. pp. 101 *et seq.*, 167 *et seq.*

But instead of cringing praises, the reply bore back authoritative warnings from Antony to his princes. "Ye must bear in mind," he wrote, "that Christ is the only true and eternal Sovereign. And while ye rule," he concluded, "ye are bound to maintain justice and to be careful of the poor."[49]

Notwithstanding the drawbacks upon Christian development, it was going forward. New tastes were awakened, and with them new energies were exerted. Art had been gradually winning its way amongst the Christians of earlier generations. But it was still Heathen. Not until the imperial edicts went forth, commanding the construction of Christian churches, did art enter upon its holier life. Elevating the purposes of the architect, faith also beautified the visions of the painter and the sculptor. Rude as were the forms of the image, the picture or the sanctuary, they bore the impress of a higher character than had ever been attained amidst the merely outward glories of ancient art.[50]

Poetry, too, was stirred by nobler influences. Not far from the beginning of Constantine's reign, Commodianus is believed to have composed his Instructions. With little of what is called poetic fire, he possessed much of what may be called Christian fire. Nothing could be more zealous than his remonstrances to the Heathen. "Ye who have been children during all these latter centuries, will ye be so for

[49] Athanasius, Vit. Anton., 81.

[50] "Ces monuments en apparence si grossiers sont le plus vieil heritage que nous aient transmis nos devanciers dans la croyance en Jésus-Christ; ce sont autant de formules matérielles et permanentes de leurs actes de foi, d'espérance et de charité." Rio, de la Poésie Chrétienne, Ptie II. p. 5.

ever?[51] . . . . Gods call ye them who are stained with bloodshed? . . . . A few deceitful and nefarious priests delude you . . . . . Believe in Christ as quickly as ye may."[52] With similar earnestness the poet turns to the Christians. "I am not just, O brethren . . . . Nor do I exalt myself. Yet I do grieve for you, in seeing not one out of so great a multitude crowned in the strife. . . . . Be such as Christ would have you be!"[53] Commodianus encouraged his fellow-believers to submission under the burdens of their times. The only martyrdom which they could win, now that persecution had ceased, was to bear with the power above them in the Church and in the State. "Show thyself humble. Do no violence, and return none done to thee. Be patient, and thou shalt be a martyr. . . . . And dost thou sigh for contention, as if contentions were at an end? From the first day of thine existence until its end, within thyself is there warfare."[54]

Another Christian lyre was strung by Juvencus, a

51 "Cur annis ducentis
Fuistis infantes, numquid et semper
eritis?" VI

This, if interpreted to the letter, would place Commodianus at an earlier period than the reign of Constantine. An extract cited below will show why I adhere to the original opinion concerning his age.

52 "Dicitis esse deos qui sunt manifeste cruenti?" XVI.
"Deludunt vos pauci scelerati vates inanes" XVII.
"Tamen vos adhortor quantocius credere Christo" XXV.

53 "Justus ego non sum, fratres, de cloaca levatus;
Nec me supertollo. Sed doleo vestri, qui cerno
Ex tanto populo nullum in agone coronari." LXI.
"Esto ergo talis qualem vult esse te Christus." LVIII.

54 "Multa sunt martyria, quæ fiunt sine sanguine furso.
Alienum non cupere, velle martyrium habere,
Linguam refrenare, humilem te reddere debes,
Vim ultro non facere, nec factam reddere contra.
Mons patiens fueris, intellige te martyrem esse." XLVIII.
"Belligerare quæris, stulte, quasi bella quiescant?
E protoplasto die pugnatur in finem vobis." LXIII.

These are the verses alluded to in note 51.

Presbyter of high birth in the Spanish provinces. "Lofty songs," he begins, "flowing from the fount of Smyrna, have celebrated some men. Others have been extolled in the sweet strains of the Mincian Maro. . . . . If their lines, woven from the vain traditions of antiquity, have merited so lasting a fame, surely an eternal honor shall be given to me. For the deeds of Christ done in the body shall be my song. Divine, unstained by deception, shall be the gift I bring to the people."[55] With this, Juvencus transferred to his own pages the narrative of the Evangelists. "So much," he wrote, "hath the grace of Christ descended upon me, that the glory of the sacred law hath stooped to receive terrestrial adornments in my verses. Thus hath the peace of Christ inspired me; thus, too, the peace of the Empire, which Constantine, ruler of the wide earth, doth graciously preserve."[56] Not all the sublimity of the theme which the poet had chosen could divert him from offering the ordinary adulations to the sovereign.

The influence of the authority upon which the Catholic leaders had thrown themselves in order to rise to power was universal. Neither the poet nor

55 "Innumeros homines . . . . .
Hos celsi cantus Smyrnæ de fonte fluentes
Illos Minciadæ celebrat dulcedo Maronis . . . .
Quod si tam longam meruerunt carmina famam,
Quæ veterum gestis hominum mendacia nectunt,
Nobis certa fides æternæ in secula laudis
Immortale decus tribuet, meritumque rependet.
Nam mihi carmen erunt Christi vitalia gesta,
Divinum in populis falsi sine crimine donum."
De Hist Evang., Prolog.

56 "Et in tantum luxit mihi gratia Christi,
Versibus ut nostris divinæ gloria legis
Ornamenta libens caperet terrestria linguæ
Hæc mihi pax Christi tribuit, pax hæc mihi secli,
Quam fovet indulgens terræ regnator apertæ
Constantinus."
Ib., lib. IV. ad fin.

the artist, neither the poor nor the rich, neither the laity nor the clergy, could surmount the impressions which they thus received. Nor did those in power themselves escape the spell. Humbled as were their followers, prostrate as were their adversaries, the waters did not yet bear them above the imperial supremacy. On that they lay stranded at the moment when their sails seemed fullest of prospering winds.[57] Meanwhile, the jagged points in the character of the sovereign on whom the Christians so much depended were wearing into their own habits and institutions.

The look that they wear in the ancient records is puzzling from its contradictions. The subjection evident on one side changes into independence on the other. From one position, a divided multitude may be seen, struggling in the folds of the Christian banner that it knew not how to uprear. But from another position, the banner is beheld above a host of earnest spirits, looking from the world in which they knew themselves oppressed up to that in which they believed themselves destined to obtain an eternal deliverance. Certainly the only class to imagine itself in possession of liberty was that of the Christians in power.

The aggregate of liberty, so to speak, could not but be lessened by the rise of the Catholic Christians. Not only were the Heathen and the Jews surrounded by fresh restrictions. Not only were the Heretical Christians subject to new restraints. But the Catho-

[57] "La protection du pouvoir temporel gênait la protégée." Troplong, Influence du Christianisme sur le Droit Civil des Romains, p. 112.

lics themselves were restrained and restricted as they had never been. The spiritual liberty, once their only possession, was to a great degree lost amidst the temporal liberties which they seemed to have gained. What they really obtained was the liberty to scheme, to quarrel and to oppress, rather than the higher liberty to endure, to forbear and to rest.[58]

[58] "The Christians soon learned to sing a new song, and to acquire a taste for *wholesome* severities..... The laws against Heretics collected in the Theodosian Code, stand as a shameful monument of the perse cuting Anti-Christian spirit which broke out in the fourth century." Jortin's Remarks on Eccles. Hist., vol. II. p. 264.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE COUNCIL OF NICE.

"Che i lieti onor tornaro in tristi lutti." — *Inferno.*

The Catholics rose to power in the midst of controversies. Of these we have already witnessed the instances leading to the councils at Rome and at Arles. A still more striking example occurs in the dissensions resulting in the council of Nice.

Old controversies as well as new ones were rankling amongst the dominant Christians. Points of merely ritual character, like the yet unsettled question concerning the Easter season, were agitated in some directions. In others, points of discipline led to more ardent contentions. The Egyptian dioceses, for instance, were distracted by angry differences in relation to the treatment of those who had bowed beneath persecution. It was on this account that Meletius, the Bishop of Lycopolis, broke out against the supremacy of the Alexandrian Bishop.[1] Fierce as were these strifes, they bore no comparison to those enkindled on points of doctrine.

[1] Soc., I. 6; Soz., I. 24; Theod., I. 9; Epiph., Adv. Hær., lib. II. tom. II. LXVIII. 1 *et seq.*

It had always been much easier for the Christians to arrange their ritual or to determine their discipline than to establish their doctrines. The number of Heretical parties arising, some to abide and others to vanish, is not the only remaining proof concerning the theological variations of the primitive times. Amongst the Catholics themselves the utmost diversity of views prevailed. Some were too humble or too doubtful to enter upon the investigation of doctrinal mysteries. Others were too resolute or too devout, as they would say, to allow that any such mysteries existed. These had no uncertainties. The opposite class had no certainties.

Between the two, however, an intermediate position was held by the main body of the Catholic Christians. The mild statements [2] of such as Justin Martyr, the father, as he may be called, of the early theology, found far more general response than the wavering reveries of the unassured or the positive assertions of the assured believers by whom he was preceded or followed. Without denying the efficacy of human reason, the Catholics generally denied its power to unveil all that was comprehended in the Deity. Yet the mystery thus undisturbed was not allowed to interfere with the intensity of their faith. They believed the more earnestly in recognizing their inability to define that which they believed. Had they been able to mark it out as if it were a human science, they would have felt less trust in it as a truth that was Divine.

[2] Especially of his views on the Trinity. Dial. c. Tryph., 127. So Irenæus, Adv. Hær., I. 10. An analysis of the early doctrines on the same point may be found in Münscher, Handbuch der Dogmen-Geschichte, vol. I. pp. 380 *et seq.*

Such believers as these were distinguished in another way. The form of doctrine held a subordinate place in their regards to the form of life. They looked to the law as well as to the revelation which had been made. To prove their faith in Christ, they thought it more necessary to obey His commandments than to speculate upon His doctrines, especially upon those connected with the unseen world. On this spoke Alexander the Bishop of Nicopolis, some years before the accession of Constantine. "The Christian philosophy," he affirmed, "is called simple. For its principal concern is to regulate the manners of men, having first intimated the right doctrine concerning the Deity as the one efficient Cause of all things. It forbears obscure questions and nice arguments about the reason of things; nor does it labor to describe particularly the grounds and nature of every virtue; but holdeth forth in a general way the precepts of all virtue. By attending to which," concludes the Lycopolitan, "the common people, as experience shows, are much influenced, and gradually allured to the practice of love and piety."[3] Such was the remonstrance of an earnest spirit against the theological wanderings of his contemporaries. It recalled them to the ground on which the Catholics as a mass had long stood.

It was listened to, however, by but a few. More and more of the Catholics had attached themselves to the extremes already described as on either side

[3] From Lardner's Testimonies of Ancient Heathens, ch. 43, vol. 8, p. 351. The learned Doctor is in doubt, however, as to Alexander's having been a Christian or "a Gentile."

of the main body. Some were losing, others were gaining confidence. Larger numbers were banded together in scaling the heights of the invisible world. Greater also was the proportion of those who sank back into the depths of the world around them. There were more to doubt. There were more to dare.

With the ambition of the Catholic Christians, in a worldly sense, their ambition in a spiritual sense increased. The bolder visionaries were taking the lead. Holding the acquisition of mysterious knowledge to be above all other things to which they could attain, they followed every phantom of doctrine to be discerned. Disorder was one of the inevitable consequences. Pursuing every form of doctrine, whatever might be its aspect or its course, the imprudent Christians lost traces of their former paths. Strife followed as inevitably as confusion. Every different theory had its followers. Every different revelation had its champions. The speculators became the combatants of the times.

To check them was the wish of every good Catholic. Whatever might be his own doctrinal tendencies, he was persuaded that his Church occupied a ground whereon its members could be united. It became the conviction of the most ardent, of the most despairing. The doubtful and the resolute, as well as the moderate believers, were alike desirous of settling the disturbances in which they were involved. Unless this was done, their union and their liberty would be fearfully endangered.

Amongst the Catholic prelates none held a higher rank than the Bishop of Alexandria. To him, if to

any at the present period, belonged the title of Primate or Metropolitan. His sway extended from the great city in which he resided over all the districts of the Mediterranean coast as far as the Pentapolis. More than a hundred Bishops were suffragans to the Alexandrian; while the inferior clergy dependent upon him as directly as upon their more nominal superiors,[4] could be counted only by thousands.

This vast diocese had been thrown into excitement by various circumstances. Persecution had not ceased when the controversy of which Meletius of Lycopolis has been mentioned as the head, burst forth with extraordinary violence. At first a discussion concerning points of discipline at Alexandria, it became a question between order and disorder, rupture or union throughout the Church universal. Meletius began with reform. He went on with schism. Usurping the functions of the Alexandrian primate, he took upon himself to ordain new incumbents to the offices of the see.[5] It was a cause to call up from every quarter champions on either side.

Amongst the earlier adherents of Meletius, while that prelate wore the guise of a reformer, was the famous Arius. No other individual amongst all the early Christians was so variously portrayed by his contemporaries. Nor does any other still present so many different features to the reader of the ancient

[4] "Valesius thinks his privilege was rather that he might ordain, if he pleased; but not that he had the sole power of ordaining Presbyters and Deacons. But either way, it was a great privilege, and peculiar to the Bishop of Alexandria; for no other Metropolitan pretended to the like power besides himself." Bingham, Christ. Antiq., book. II. ch. XVI. 23.

[5] Soc., I. 9. Soz., I. 24.

histories. There seem to have been points of contact between him and every one of the doctrinal parties amongst the Catholics. Yet there are also to be seen other points of separation, and so decided, that the points of contact appear slight and infrequent in the comparison. It will not do, however, to take the charges and the reproaches of his impassioned enemies as the outlines in which the character of Arius is to be drawn.

At the time of his appearance, Arius was about thirty years old. Already had he attained to great knowledge and to still greater devotion, according to the unwilling testimonies of his later adversaries. They do not allow, however, that he joined the Bishop of Lycopolis because that prelate was upholding a more rigid discipline than prevailed at Alexandria. But there is no doubt that when the Lycopolitan veered from reform to schism, Arius returned to the support of the Alexandrian, who at once raised his champion to the diaconate. But on the Deacon's venturing to express himself opposed to some measure of his superior, he was deposed by the disdainful Bishop.[6] Nor was it until the primacy passed into other hands, that Arius was restored. He was also made a Presbyter, and appointed to the charge of the school in which Clement and Origen had taught of old.[7]

Could we read the heart of the new teacher, we should more clearly understand the whole history of his times. If his revilers were right, he was an in-

[6] Soz., I. 15.
[7] Synodicon, cited by Bingham, Christ. Ant., book III. ch. IX. 5, note *v*.

triguing assailant of all that was most sacred in their religion and its institutions. From another point of view, Arius appears on the side of all that was most essential to his contemporaries. He seems to have been the champion of the liberty without which the Catholics could not preserve their union, nor any Christians their faith. He may not have been so brave or so wise at the outset. He certainly was not when the strife in which he soon engaged progressed. But for the moment, he was subdued by the associations of the school in which he took the chair. It was through reverence for the principles of the past that he seems to have become alienated from those who thought more of the present than of the future.

A historian peculiarly earnest in upholding the fame of Arius declares him to have refused the suffrages by which his admirers sought to transfer him from the school to the primacy.[8] It is quite as probable a statement as that of his antagonists who describe him as possessed with jealousy against his successful competitor, Alexander.[9] However this may be, the Primate and the teacher were soon embroiled.

The impulse towards settling the doctrinal controversies of the Catholics was at its height. It reached the see of Alexandria. Could it but find vent there, the effect would be felt over all Christian realms. Yet though the Alexandrian see was fitted by its magnitude to take the initiative in the desired move-

[8] Philostorg., i. 4. [9] Theodoret., i. 2.

ments, it was unfitted, on the other hand, by its turbulent condition. Long continued agitations had rendered the Alexandrian Christians, the Catholics as well as the Heretics, particularly contentious and violent. Were the lists opened in such a community, they would soon be filled by angry brawls.

Some years, apparently, after his election to the primacy, Alexander called a conference of the clergy under his more immediate jurisdiction. There was nothing unusual, either in summoning such an assembly or in proposing theological topics for its deliberation. But it seems to have been with more than ordinary solemnity that Alexander introduced the subject of the Trinity by stating his views, and then by demanding his clergy to explain their own convictions. The demand was suddenly answered.

Without waiting his turn, Arius rose up to confute the doctrine advanced by the Primate. It was nothing else, he said, than the exposition which Sabellius of the Pentapolis had put forth, more than half a century before. "Thou mayest remember," Arius probably added, as he addressed the Primate, "how thy predecessor Dionysius called a council, wherein Sabellius was condemned as an enemy of God.[10] With him thou sayest that there is but one Deity, who appeareth, sometimes as the Father, sometimes as the Son, and sometimes as the Holy Ghost, yet that He is always One and the same. But I aver," continued Arius, "that the Son and the Holy Ghost are not to be so confounded with

[10] Lib. Synod., ap. Conc., tom. I. p. 853.

the Father." "Thou mistakest me," Alexander may have replied. "I say not that the Trinity is composed of one God, but of three Persons in one God. The Son and the Father, for instance, are distinct, yet are they one, that is, of the same substance and of the same eternity." "Then I oppose thee there," Arius probably rejoined. "For it is clear to me that the Son, though of the same substance with the Father, had a beginning, nay, was created by the Father's will."[11] These few words, or others as few, fell like sparks amongst the inflammable spirits of the age.

The conference broke up in indecision. As many, probably, were ready to agree with their teacher as to follow their Primate. The point at issue had already come up, both in Egypt and in the other provinces. But it had never been decided in so authoritative a manner as to prevent its being revived. It did not prove difficult to bring the Egyptian clergy to the side of their head. After a brief delay, ascribed by the Catholic writers to the tenderness of the Primate, he issued orders for the convocation of all the Alexandrian clergy. Thirty-six Presbyters and forty-four Deacons obeyed the summons. In obedience to the dictates of Alexander, they declared Arius to be deposed from his offices and excommunicated.[12]

[11] Münscher (Handbuch der Dogmen-Geschichte, vol. III. p. 355) makes these the great points of Arianism. The account in the text is from Soc. I. 5, compared with Soz., I. 15; Theod., I. 4; Phil., I. 4; Epiph., Adv. Hær., lib. II. tom. II., LXIX. 3. "Vers l'an 319," says Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. VI. p. 737, note.

[12] Alex., Epist. Encycl., ap. Athanas., Opera, tom. I. pp. 400 *et ant.*

It was no longer sufficient to proceed against Arius alone. Two Bishops, Secundus of Ptolemais and Theonas of Marmarica, together with a larger number of Priests and Deacons, had already embraced the doctrines condemned at Alexandria.[13] The Primate found it prudent to convoke his suffragan Bishops, of whom nearly a hundred, accompanied by members of the subordinate clergy, assembled. Before this body, Arius and his adherents appeared. But instead of recanting the views which had brought them into peril, they declared through Arius that their convictions were unchangeable. The council instantly reiterated the sentence of the Alexandrian synod against Arius, at the same time extending it against all his supporters.[14] Alarmed, apparently, by the rapidity with which the doctrine of Arius had spread amongst the Egyptian Catholics, the council ordered that none but the Primate should henceforth be entitled to preach before the people of Alexandria.[15]

Far from bringing the controversy to a close by these measures against Arius and his partisans, the Primate and his suffragans were but amplifying the strife. Already had it rolled, to use the language of the contemporary historian, "from Alexandria as from a summit, over Egypt, and Libya, and the Thebaid. But now," continues Eusebius, "it dashed upon other districts and cities. So that it was a common sight to see not only the heads of the

[13] Alexander, ap. Theod., I. 4, Soc., I. 6.

[14] Alex., ap. Theodoret., I. 5.

[15] Soz., VII. 19.

Churches wrangling with one another, but the very multitudes themselves divided, some on this, and others on that side. To such a degree of unnaturalness were these things carried, that the holy mysteries of our divine religion were made the subjects of comedies in the very theatres of the unbelievers."[16]

Arius himself was by this time in Palestine, whither many of his adherents fled from the violence which the Primate directed against them at Alexandria. Several of them were employed by Arius in conveying copies of the confession, drawn up for them as well as well as for himself, to the prelates of the Eastern provinces. Many of those to whom Arius thus made his appeal, declared him of their communion, notwithstanding the sentence of Alexander and the Egyptian suffragans. Others, on the contrary, refusing to listen to the representations of the fugitive, went so far, in some instances, as to foment the indignation of Alexander by charges of their own against his offending Presbyter.[17] Excommunicate and exile though he were, Arius saw the Christians of the East arraying themselves against one another to echo or to stifle the words which he had uttered at Alexandria.

There was little thought, amongst either the prelates or their people, concerning the hazards of such contentions. To one party, as its champions believed, was entrusted the glory of God the Father. To the other, its leaders declared, was committed the glory

[16] Vit. Const, II. 61. [17] Soz., I. 15.

of God the Son.[18] We are for the doctrine of the Church, exclaimed the Catholics. Nay, rejoined the Arians, we are the upholders of the doctrine which the Church hath sanctioned until now. The Arians contended for the liberty of the individual believer. The Catholics contended for his union with his fellow-believers. Both forgot the dangers to themselves. Both forgot the dangers to the cause which they upheld.[19] To both peace seemed more perilous than warfare.[20] With both, the reconciliation that had been possible at the beginning of their differences soon became impossible.

Conspicuous amongst the Eastern prelates was Eusebius of Nicomedia. At that city, the capital of the realms still governed by Licinius, the Bishop found favor with Licinius's wife and Constantine's sister, the Empress Constantia.[21] The increasing coldness of the Emperor towards the Christians rendered the partiality of the Empress towards Eusebius the more remarkable. Her countenance could not but add to his reputation, especially throughout the Eastern provinces. Between the prelate thus distinguished and Arius the Alexandrian, the bonds of companionship in early

[18] As Julius of Rome afterwards wrote: "Theirs [the Arians] was no ordinary offence, neither had they sinned against man, but against our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the Son of the Living God." Ap. Athanas., Apol. Cont. Arian., 23, Oxford trans.

[19] "Compellimur hæreticorum et blasphemantium vitiis," exclaimed the ardent Hilary of Poitiers, "illicita agere, ardua scandere, ineffabilia eloqui, inconcessa præsumere." De Trin., II. 2.

[20] "Non veggio i nembi che distende Marte
Su i nostri dolci campi:
Solo avvien che mia mente arda ed avvampi,
Desiando spiegar la forza e l'ale
Di novo inno immortale."
GUIDI.

[21] Baronius, Ann. Eccl., Ad Ann. 315, § XXV.

studies yet held fast,[22] strengthened, indeed, by the unanimity of the former associates in relation to the doctrines at present controverted. To Eusebius, therefore, wrote Arius, "the object of enmity to Father Alexander," as the letter began, "on account of the all-conquering truth." "I have been driven out from Alexandria," says Arius, "as though I had been an apostate. Yet every Bishop of the East but three has taken my part. Hear, I pray thee, the views that have been vilified by my Primate, and aid me in supporting them."[23]

The Nicomedian was not slow in answering. "Thy views," he says, "are mine. And as thou thinkest what is right, pray that all may think likewise."[24] This assurance was probably accompanied by an invitation to Arius to visit Nicomedia. Thither at all events, Arius, pursued by the reproaches of his Bishop, soon retired. Fortified by the sympathies of his clergy, Eusebius wrote in behalf of his persecuted friend to the Primate.[25] His remonstrances to Alexander producing no effect, the Nicomedian prelate addressed himself to his colleagues generally.[26] To them the Alexandrian likewise wrote, multiplying his letters[27] and heightening his menaces not only against Arius, but against all by whom he was encouraged or harbored.[28]

[22] "My fellow-Lucianist," says Arius, in reference to his having studied with Eusebius under Lucian of Antioch. Lucian died a martyr in 312. Ruinart, Acta Mart., tom. III. p. 180.

[23] Theod., I. 5. Epiph., Adv. Hær., lib. II. tom. II., LXIX. 6.

[24] Athan., De Syn. Arim. et Sel., 17.

[25] Soz., I. 15. Soc., I. 6.

[26] Theod., I. 5. Soc., I. 6. Soz., I. 15.

[27] Epiphanius mentions as many as seventy. Adv. Hær., lib. II. tom. II., LXIX. 4.

[28] Soc., I. 6.

Arius no longer filled up the foreground of the strife. Yet he had by no means fallen into the background. In his own name and in that of his companions excommunicated at Alexandria, he addressed a letter to his Primate. Recognising his authority to excommunicate and to banish them, the exiles protest against his injustice. The opinions which they had expressed were no other than those to which Alexander himself had frequently given utterance. Would he but be true to his own convictions, he could not avoid being just to those whom he had sent forth from their disciples and their homes.[29] Small must have been the hope that Arius entertained concerning the effect of his appeal to so intolerant a prelate as Alexander. There could be no peace between them, as the fugitive must have known, until he had made submission to his superior. Nor would that restore tranquillity. Others had embarked in the craft which he had launched. Though he might yearn for the shore, they preferred the stormy sea.

He had no wish, however, to return upon his course. It was not in his nature to withdraw from the position which he had sought and to which he had attracted others. An exposition of his doctrine in poetical form, and under the poetical name of the Thalia, was issued by him from his retreat at Nicomedia. Songs "for the sea, the mill, and the road,"[30] were also sent forth to gather converts to the creed of which the principal tenets were embodied in the

[29] Athan., De Syn. Arim. et Sel., 16. Epiph., Adv. Hær., lib. II. tom. II. LXIX. 7, 8.

[30] Philostorg., II. 2.

verses. "I have labored," Arius wrote somewhat vain-gloriously, "for the glory of God."[31] Returning, as it seems, from Nicomedia to Palestine, where he found another protector in Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, Arius obtained permission to exercise the functions of a teacher and a minister.[32] All around him raged the warfare between his supporters and their adversaries.

By this time, Constantine had become sole Emperor. Arriving at Nicomedia, where resided his sister, the widow of Licinius, he found himself encompassed by the controversies in which her favorite, the Bishop Eusebius, had now been engaged for two or three years.[33] Urged by his own desire that his subjects should be tranquillized, yet not uninfluenced by the representations of the Nicomedian, Constantine addressed a despatch "to Alexander and Arius" in common.[34]

Prefacing a few words to express his constant concern for the public peace, whereof, as he remarked, the Christians had obtained signal proof in his measures concerning the Donatist difficulties, the Emperor signifies his entire disapproval of the recent controversies in the East. "This," writes Constantine, "I understand to have been the origin of the present difficulty. When thou, Alexander, didst inquire of thy Presbyters what each one thought concerning a certain passage of the Scriptures, thou wert interrogating

[31] Thus the Thalia, cited by Athanasius, Orat. I. Cont. Arian., 5.

[32] Soz., I. 15.

[33] Arius probably left Alexandria in 320, and arrived at Nicomedia late in that, or early in the following year. It was now near the end of 323 or the beginning of 324.

[34] Ap. Eus., Vit. Const., II. 64.

them concerning a point of controversy. And thou, Arius, didst hold fast to what thou shouldst neither have taken into thy mind at first, nor held there, if it entered in, except thou didst so silently. . . . . In matters of such a nature, one must keep his tongue under control, lest his mind should fail him in the interpretation of the point proposed, or lest his hearers fall into blasphemy and schism in consequence of inability to arrive at a clear comprehension of his statements.[35] . . . . . And I say this without any intention of compelling you to be agreed in this exceeding unwise dispute, or whatever it may be styled. For the honor of your Church may be preserved uninjured, while one and the same communion may be maintained for all, despite your differences with one another on things of the least importance."[36] It was a rude means that the Emperor adopted in sneering at the doctrines on which both Arius and Alexander believed the glory of the Divinity to depend. "Give back to me," continues Constantine, "my tranquil days and untroubled nights. . . . . For as long as my fellow-servants, the people of God, are severed by so unreasonable and so injurious a strife, how am I to be calm in mind? . . . . . The tidings of your contentions have changed my purposes of journeying to the East, lest I should be compelled to see with my eyes what I did not think it possible even to hear with my ears."[37]

[35] Ib., ib., 69.

"But an exchange of ignorance for that
Which is another kind of ignorance."
BYRON.

[36] Ap. Eus., Vit. Const., II. 71.

[37] Ib., ib., 72.

To bear this letter the Emperor selected a prelate familiar with missions of a similar character. Amongst the first to avail themselves of the favor which Constantine extended towards the Catholic Christians, was the Bishop of Cordova, known by the name of Hosius, or Saint.[38] He had encountered sufficient peril during the persecution[39] to appreciate the prosperity which dawned from the throne assumed by Constantine. Employed by the sovereign in carrying out his measures to maintain the Catholics against the Donatists of Africa, Hosius had proved himself eminently fitted for the imperial service. Instead of returning to his diocese, he appears to have been detained at the court, where the demand for counsels or for homages like his increased with every year. To his suggestion may be ascribed the purport of the despatches with which he was sent to Alexandria.[40]

Thither Arius was now recalled by the Emperor rather than by his still hostile Primate. The letter addressed to him as well as to Alexander appears to have been read before them both at a council held by Hosius.[41] It does not appear that this body was called upon to express its own opinions so much as to hear those of its sovereign. If any decision was expected from the Egyptian clergy, it was undoubtedly rendered in support of their Primate against

[38] Ὁ ἀληθῶς Ὅσιος, exclaims Athanasius, Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 45.

[39] "I was one of the confessors," he wrote to Constantius, "under Maximian." Ap. Athan., as above, 44. So Eus., Vit. Const., III. 63.

[40] Soc., I. 7.

[41] Ep. ap. Athan., Apol. Cont. Arian., 74.

the Presbyter whom most of them regarded as already sentenced. Whatever were the proceedings of the council, the disturbances out of doors grew more and more alarming. The passions of the opposing parties were excited not only against one another, but against the interposition by which peace had been enjoined upon them. So far were some hurried as "to dare," according to the Christian biographer, "to insult the images of the Emperor."[42]

Hosius at once returned to the court from which he had been sent. His report, however speciously presented, could not impose upon the keen and suspicious judgment of Constantine. Perhaps the first impulse of the Emperor was to lead his legions against the seditious Alexandrians. But calmer counsels prevailed. At the instance, it is said, of Hosius,[43] the Bishops of the Eastern provinces were summoned to meet in general council at Nice, not far from the imperial residence of Nicomedia. The name of the city, in our tongue Victory, presaged the determination of the sovereign to put down the strife amongst his Christian subjects.

Upwards of three hundred[44] prelates were transported in the early summer to Nice, where they were also entertained at the expense of the imperial treasury.[45] Hosius came as the representative of the Emperor. The moderate Catholics were represented by Eusebius of Nicomedia and his namesake of

[42] Eus., Vit. Const., III. 4.

[43] "Auctore illo." Sulp. Sev., II. p. 292, ed. De la Bigne.

[44] As to the number, Athanasius is decisive. Ep. ad Afr. Episc., 2.

[45] June, 325. Eus., Vit. Const., III. 6, 9. Soc., I. 8. Theod., I. 7.

Cæsarea. By their adversaries, these prelates and their adherents were already styled Arians. Arius himself, not being of the episcopal rank, could have no seat in the council. But he was particularly cited to appear on the spot where a question so momentous to him was to be decided.[46] His opponents gathered under the lead of the Primate Alexander, who was accompanied by his right-hand man, the Deacon Athanasius.

This remarkable man was born at Alexandria about the beginning of the last general persecution. He was there educated under the eye of the Primate whose minister he became in after years. The very boyhood of Athanasius was filled with impressions of suffering from violence mingled with memories of glory in resistance unto death. As the boy grew up, his early associations were confirmed in intercourse with such as the anchorite Antony and the Primate Alexander. The man was prepared for his place amongst his contemporaries.

Athanasius grew to be the life and soul of the more rigid Catholics. He should never be mentioned but in terms of reverence for the devotion which he displayed throughout a life of trial towards what he conceived to be the truth. Nor should it ever be denied that the vigorous consistency demanded by the support of any cause existed to an eminent degree in him. He was only too consistent. For he was unyielding. He was only too vigorous. For he was fiery and relentless. He would have been a

[46] Rufinus, cited by Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. vi. p. 648.

perfect follower of the law of war. He was but an imperfect follower of the law of peace.[47]

There were many of the same stamp in the assembling council. Of those who had been summoned to it, a considerable proportion consisted of men who had suffered from the persecution, still recent, it will be remembered, in the East. The historian describes the mutilation apparent in the persons of the gathering prelates. "It was the same," he exclaims, "as to behold a crowd of martyrs."[48] Such as had thus endured torture and exile for the sake of their faith, would not be disposed to any lenient course towards those by whom they conceived their faith to be assailed. Others, without the same experience in suffering, would have the same inclination to severity. Of all these Athanasius was the natural leader.

But what was the question at issue? It was no longer the merely theological distinction that had been raised in the conference at Alexandria. It was no longer upon the inferences that had since been deduced amongst the leaders of the conflicting parties. The controversy had assumed a more general significance. Nothing less was at stake than the possibility of settling the Catholic doctrines. If a Presbyter like Arius, however supported by higher personages, was to pronounce upon the cardinal points in the creed of his Church, then were they open to the pronunciations of one individual after

47 "Torcete alla religione
Tal che fu nato a cingersi la spada"
Paradiso.

48 *Καὶ ἁπαξαπλῶς ἦν ἰδεῖν δῆμον μαρτύρων κατὰ ταυτὸν συνηθροισμένον.* Theod., I. 7.

another, of one generation after another, throughout all time to come. But were the pretensions of Arius condemned, the Church might hope to possess its doctrines in peace.

Solemn was the aspect of the council even before its opening. Prelates from the entire East thronged the thoroughfares and abodes of Nice. The West was represented by a Bishop of Gaul, and Cæcilian, the Bishop of Carthage, as well as by Hosius of Cordova. Some came even from beyond the imperial territories. The Orient sent its delegate in the Bishop of Persis. Theophilus, perhaps a captive who had assumed the episcopacy amongst his converted captors, appeared as the Bishop of the Goths.[49] It was as if the future, together with the present and the past, were taking part in deciding the strife on the result of which the Catholic Church depended then and forever.

The immediate object which the Emperor had in view was the restoration of order throughout his newly acquired realms in the East. But there was another point more important, though less prominent, which he must have had it in mind to decide according to the course of affairs in the council. He stood already committed as a Christian sovereign. But it was not yet clear to him, still less clear, therefore, was it to his Christian subjects, how far he could make his religion the religion of the Empire. Faith in the stability of the Christian doctrines was essen-

[49] The signatures of the prelates are ap. Conc., tom. II. pp. 55 *et seq.*, ed. Labbe.

tial to his belief as an individual. It was much more essential to his policy as a sovereign. Nor until he beheld a doctrinal system upreared above the possibility of doubt or of heresy, could Constantine achieve the elevation of Christianity to the first place amongst the religions of his subjects. Thus the principal object that he had in convoking the council at Nice, was to prove the fitness of Christianity to become what may be called the imperial religion. Of such a purpose the members of the council could not be ignorant; to it they could not be indifferent. It was not merely to decide the truth that they were assembled. They came to prove whether their faith should become the faith of the Empire.

The proceedings of the council were not merely theological, but, to a great degree, political in their character. Primary meetings, as they may be termed, were held for the purpose of forming and of interchanging opinions upon the course to be pursued. Arius was repeatedly examined.[50] But the number of those prepared to countenance his doctrines was diminished by the circumstances in which they found themselves situated; while, from the same reason, his opponents increased both in numbers and in resolution. "They would hold their ears," says the eye-witness, Athanasius, "against the heresy, which all with one consent condemned and anathematized as hostile to the faith of the Church."[51] The council did not wait its

[50] Soz., I. 17.

[51] Ad. Episc. Ægypt. et Lib., 13.

opening to form its decision. Yet there were two parties to greet the Emperor on his arrival at Nice. Each of the two had its complaints, its menaces against its antagonists to lay before him. It was more than he could tolerate, not to say more than he could comprehend.[52] The policy of establishing a religion, exciting or allowing such passions amongst its highest ministers, must have become more than ever doubtful to the mind of Constantine.

On the whole, however, he was not disposed to object to controversies in which he could interest himself. He called the council to a session at his palace, and there, after listening to a congratulatory address from one of the prelates, he expressed his own satisfaction, says a member present, "at enjoying the sight of them around him." But they must make peace with one another, he declared, if they would obtain the advantages and fulfil the duties connected with their position "as priests of God and servants of their common Lord and Saviour." Saying these words, the Emperor declared the council free to discuss and to judge the questions on account of which it had been assembled.[53]

We need not rehearse the disputes arising in the presence of the Emperor, beneath the summer sun of Nice. In such circumstances there were but few voices to be raised in behalf of moderation, still fewer in behalf of sacrifice. Of those to whom

[52] Soc., I. 8. Soz., I. 17.

[53] Eus., Vit. Const., III. 10 *et seq.* Soc., I. 8.

these voices belonged, no one was more earnestly bent upon accomplishing the reconciliation of his brethren than Eusebius, the Bishop of Cæsarea. Born and reared in Christianity, he had devoted his life to learning and to asserting the truth whereon his faith appeared to him to rest. His researches had not been confined to doctrinal traditions. Going back to former times, he studied the preparation for Christ's coming, and followed out the fortunes of the earlier Christians. His charity increased with his learning. Differences of opinion were not so fatal in his judgment as in that of many less familiar with the controversies and the continual advances of the past. How few there were at Nice to join him in his sentiments and his exertions, Eusebius himself describes in a letter to his people at Cæsarea. "I proposed," he says, "a formula, which was read before the Emperor. . . . . It contained the doctrine received by me from my predecessors, learned with the first rudiments of our religion, and imbibed with the waters of baptism. And as I acquired it from the Scriptures, as I believed and taught it both in my priesthood and my episcopate, so do I now, I informed the council, lay it before you all." He then proceeds to repeat his creed, resembling, though not identical with that which Arius had asserted six years before. The Emperor signified his satisfaction. But questions and arguments arose amongst the rigid Catholics, by whom Eusebius confesses himself to have been induced to adopt a creed more distinctly opposed to the doctrines of Arius.[54]

[54] Ap. Soc., I. 8. Theod., I. 12.

A single word, rather, a single syllable[55] had come to denote the variance between the parties of Arius and of Athanasius. The latter asserted that the Father and the Son were united in Homoëusia, or Sameness of Substance.[56] The former argued that the union consisted merely in Homoioëusia, or Likeness of Substance.[57] The more the Arians resisted, the more their opponents demanded the adoption of the syllable implying consubstantiality.[58] "It will cut off your heresy," was the cry on one side. "But it will separate us from you," was the plea on the other side. "Then let us take it up at once," rejoined the extreme Catholics, "if it is to rid our faith of the waverings by which it hath been impaired in our own eyes and in those of our Emperor." The Emperor soon transferred his approval from the calm statements of Eusebius to the boisterous denunciations of the other party.

The creed of the council was soon drawn up in terms sufficiently explicit to satisfy both the sovereign and the triumphant prelates. On the one hand, the fitness of the Catholic faith to become the imperial religion seemed to be proved. On the other, the security in which its members had desired to establish its doctrines appeared to be assured. The

[55] *Καὶ ταῦθ' ὑπὲρ τοῦ ; συλλαβῆς ἕσως μιᾶς.* Greg. Naz., Carm., De Virt., 728. Or as the historian says, *Ὁμοούσιον ὄνομα.* Soz., II. 18.

[56] *Ὁμός, οὐσία.*

[57] *Ὅμοιος, οὐσια.*

[58] See Athanasius, De Decretis Nic. Synodi, 19 *et seq.*, on the vital importance of declaring the Consubstantiality. "Hoc verbum," says Ambrose, "in tractatu fidei posuerunt patres quia id viderunt adversariis esse formidini ; ut tanquam evaginato ab ipsis gladio ipsorum nefandæ caput hæreseos amputarent." De Fide, III. 15.

majority of the council was not content until a fierce anathema upon Arius and his partisans had been added to the creed.[59]

Five prelates alone refused to subscribe to the decision of the council. Two of these were Secundus of Ptolemais and Theonas of Marmarica, the same by whom the doctrines of Arius had first been supported. The other three were Maris of Chalcedon, Theognis of Nice and Eusebius of Nicomedia. Had they been able to deal with their colleagues alone, their resistance might have been more effectual. But the Emperor broke in with the declaration that "every one rejecting the decrees of the council should be instantly banished as disobedient to the Divine Laws."[60] Thereupon three out of the five nonconformists submitted.

Arius, anathematized not only in creed but in person,[61] was brought before Constantine, who required him to renounce his doctrines. "I am not guilty," said the unhappy man, "of the charges brought against me." "Deny as thou wilt," retorted the irascible Emperor, "the Lord of all things doth not fail to make thy evil purposes apparent."[62] The Catholic writer will have it that Arius then made the required renunciation. But there is no doubt that Arius was ordered into exile. This would not have been the case, had he made the ample submission which the Emperor demanded. So much, moreover, does his example appear to

[59] Soc., I. 8.

[60] Soz., I. 20.

[61] Being prohibited from returning to Alexandria. Soc., I. 8.

[62] Epiph., Adv. Hær., lib. II. tom. II., LXIX. 9. The time at which the interview took place is not precisely stated.

have weighed with his earliest adherents, the Bishops Secundus and Theonas, that they likewise preferred banishment to abjuration.[63] Whatever may have been their errors, they were truer to liberty at the moment of their condemnation than those by whom they were condemned.

Other controversies amongst the triumphant party were decided by the council. Touching the celebration of Easter, it was resolved to follow the custom prevailing throughout most of the Eastern and all of the Western Churches.[64] It was also determined to crush the pretensions of Meletius, the leader of the Egyptian schism against the primacy of Alexandria.[65] Of all the parties into which the Catholics had been divided, the only one to find favor at Nice was the Novatian. Nor was this deemed worthy of being spared unless its members submitted to return to the communion of the ruling Catholics.[66]

The ancient historian relates an interview between Acesius, a Novatian Bishop, and the Emperor, whose pleasure it had been to call the heretic to the council. Refusing, it would appear, to join in the decision of his colleagues, Acesius was questioned concerning the differences between him and the Catholic prelates. He answered by stating the Novatian doctrine against the right of the Bishop or of the clergy to pardon those who fell away from the faith in time of perse-

[63] Ep. Conc., ap. Soc., I. 9. Theod., I. 7. Philostorg., I. 9, 10.

[64] In opposition to the Jewish reckoning. Eus., Vit. Const., III. 14. Ep. Conc., ap. Soc., I. 9, Theod., I. 9.

[65] Ep. Conc., ap. Soc., I. 9, Theod., I. 9.

[66] As is ordered in the eighth canon of the council. Conc., tom. II. p. 35.

cution. "It is God alone," he urged, "who hath the ability and the authority to remit our sins." "Then," rejoined Constantine, "set up thy ladder, Acesius, and mount alone to Heaven." The narrative is of somewhat doubtful authenticity.[67] But it is not the less significant of the spirit which yielded as of that which prevailed at Nice. The Novatian and the Arian went for the ability of the individual to make his own creed. They succumbed. The Catholics declared the Church to be the framer of their doctrines. They prevailed.

To prove his satisfaction with the council, Constantine invited its members to assist in celebrating the twentieth year of his reign, the same that he has been described as having subsequently celebrated at Rome. The festival at Nice was far the more striking of the two. Opening with a panegyric upon Constantine, pronounced by Eusebius of Cæsarea, in presence both of the imperial court and of the Christian council, the celebration continued with a banquet to which the prelates were bidden. "But the scene," says the panegyrist of the day, "is beyond all description. Spearmen and soldiers in full armor, with naked swords, guarded the approach to the palace, and through their lines the men of God walked fearless, proceeding to the imperial halls. There they took their places, some with the Emperor, and the rest by the tables on either side. One seemed to see a vision of Christ's kingdom. Indeed, it was all more

[67] "I had it," says Socrates, (i. 10,) "from a man who would not have deceived me about what had happened in the council."

like a dream than a reality."[68] Nor were the prelates dismissed from the banqueting tables without the most liberal gifts, not only to themselves, but to their clergy, "to the virgins, widows and all engaged in the Divine service" throughout their various dioceses.[69]

Soon followed the dissolution of the council. A farewell discourse from the Emperor recommended the preservation of peace and of stable doctrine.[70] A letter had been drawn up by the council to communicate their judgment to the Alexandrian Christians.[71] But the Emperor, bent upon extending the influence of the council to all his subjects, sent despatches of his own, not only to Alexandria, but to every part of his realms, announcing and confirming the sentences of the Catholics against their adversaries.[72] Not thinking it enough to have banished Arius and his unchanging adherents, Constantine took particular pains to threaten those by whom the creed of the exiles was still cherished. Clergymen, suspected of holding the Arian doctrine, were ordered to be instantly deprived of their immunities from civil service.[73] Laymen, incurring the same suspicion, were subjected to tenfold burdens,[74] while they who dared to keep the writings of Arius in their possession were pronounced guilty of a capital crime.[75] Proportionately great, on the other hand, was the readiness of the Emperor to support those by whom his mandates

[68] Eus. Vit. Const., III. 15.
[69] Theod., I. 11.
[70] Eus., Vit. Const., III. 21.
[71] Ap. Soc., I. 9.
[72] Soc., I. 9. Eus., III. 17–20.
[73] Ap. Gelas. Cyzic., Hist. Conc. Nic., III. 1.
[74] Ib., ib.
[75] Ap. Soc., I. 9.

were obeyed. "If I saw with my own eyes," he is reported to have exclaimed, "a Bishop transgressing, I would cover him with my purple."[76]

All this did not produce tranquillity. As unrestrained as ever, the strife amongst the Christians continued to rouse the Donatists at Carthage as well as the followers of Meletius and Arius at Alexandria.[77] It was as though defiance had been hurled back against the orders of the council and of the Emperor. Most restless of all were the partisans of the exiled Arius. His banishment must have been like a continual remonstrance against their dereliction from the doctrines in which they had once been united with him. Nor are there any indications that the remonstrance was disregarded by the greater number of those to whom it appeared to be addressed. An edict, expelling some of the Arian party from Alexandria,[78] kindled new commotions. The fugitives were at once received by Theognis of Nice and Eusebius of Nicomedia, who had found it difficult to adhere to their own renunciations before the council. No sooner was their reception of the Arians from Alexandria reported to the Emperor, than he banished them from Asia Minor to Gaul.[79] To the Churches from which the Bishops were thus suddenly removed, was left the choice of their successors. These, too, were summarily displaced, about three years later, on the return of the exiled prelates who had once more proffered their allegiance to the sove-

[76] Theod., I. 11. Zonaras, XIII. 4.
[77] Eus., Vit. Const., III. 23.
[78] Constantine, ap. Theod., I. 20.
[79] This was three months, says Philostorgius, (I. 10,) after the council.

reign and to the council which he upheld.[80] The same or the next year witnessed the recall of Arius himself.[81]

It would be sad to rake up the new contentions thus arising from out the fiery ashes of the old. Athanasius, the minister and the successor of the Primate Alexander, took the lead of the party supporting the council. Another of its champions was Eustathius of Antioch, more noted after, than at the council. Against Eustathius first, and then against Athanasius, the Arian leaders directed all the batteries to be brought to bear in the councils which they made their battle-fields. Amongst the leading combatants, the name of Christians was exchanged for that of Nicenes, or that of Eusebians, or that of Arians. Council-halls rang with bitter accusations and unjust sentences of deposition. The audience chambers of the sovereign echoed to the same sounds. Eustathius was solemnly deposed by a council which Eusebius of Nicomedia and his namesake of Cæsarea, with the other heads of the Eusebian party, convened at Antioch.[82] The sentence of the Emperor soon appeared, banishing the deposed prelate to Greece. Athanasius likewise, after various encounters with his adversaries and repeated acts of resistance to the imperial orders, was finally deposed and went into exile.[83] Arius died the next year,

[80] Philost., II. 7. Soc., I. 14.

[81] 328 or 329. His recall is said to have been brought about by the influence of the Emperor's half sister Constantia. Soc., I. 25, 26.

[82] Theod., I. 20. Soc., I. 24.

[83] 335. Soc., I. 23 *et seq.* Soz., I. 28. Theod., I. 26 *et seq.* Athanas., Apol. Cont. Arian., 59 *et seq.*

the tenth from the council at Nice, and the last of Constantine's reign.[84]

One figure of gentleness appears in the midst of the more eminent Christians. Born of obscure parents, Helena became the wife of Constantius, by whom she was divorced on his elevation to the rank of Cæsar under Diocletian and Maximinian. But the repudiated spouse of Constantius was the cherished parent of Constantine, on whose accession she was formally proclaimed Augusta, in other words, the Empress Mother, at the court of her triumphing son.[85] Soon after Constantine began to favor the Christians, Helena appears to have embraced their faith, as though, says the Christian biographer, she had received it from the beginning of her life.[86] Subsequently to the terrible execution of her grandson Crispus, whom she bitterly lamented, the Empress Mother, then nearly fourscore years of age, set out upon a pilgrimage to Palestine, already the Holy Land of the Christians. Her route was marked with charities and sumptuous devotions.[87] One church was raised by her at the birth-place of the Saviour. Another was constructed upon the spot whence He had finally ascended.[88] Wonderful relics, attracted, as it were, by the sunshine of her presence, came to light. To receive the Cross which she believed herself to have found in the Sepulchre of the Saviour, Constantine ordered the erection of a magnificent Basilica on the spot where the miraculous discovery

[84] 336. Soc., I. 38. Athanas., Ep. De Mort. Arii, 2 *et seq.*
[85] Eus., Vit. Const., III. 47.
[86] Id., ib.
[87] Ib., ib., 43 – 45.
[88] Id., ib., 40 – 43.

had been made.[89] It was thus, Helena may have believed, that the violent passions of her son, as well as those of his Christian prelates, might have atonement. In the midst of these cares, she died, some years before the termination of Constantine's protracted sway.[90]

Once more was the division of the Empire renewed. In the last year but one of his reign, Constantine apportioned his realms amongst three sons and two nephews, all of whom were elevated to the rank of Cæsar.[91] To Constantinus, the eldest son, the Emperor surrendered his early dominions in Britain, Gaul and Spain, with the Tingitanian province on the African shore. Constantius, the next in age, obtained the government of Egypt, Syria and a part of Asia Minor. The provinces in Africa, intermediate between those governed by his brothers, together with Italy and Western Illyria, were bestowed on Constans, the youngest son. The two nephews, Dalmatius and Hannibalianus, received the remaining provinces in Eastern Illyria, Thrace, Greece and Asia Minor.[92] Beyond the imperial boundaries, the prospect was still shut in with clouds.[93]

[89] Paulinus of Nola tells the story, Ep. 31. Other references are in Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. VII. pp. 5 *et seq.*

[90] Not before 328. Eus., Vit. Const., III. 46.

[91] Eusebius, again the imperial panegyrist, compares them to rays of the Sun, that is, the Emperor. De Laud. Const, 3.

[92] 335. Eus., Vit. Const, IV. 51, 52. Auct., Const. Mag., 35. Zos., II. 39. Zonaras, XIII. 5. Hannibalianus was made king of Pontus and Armenia. Chron. Pasch., Ad Ann. 335.

[93] Constantine's dealings with the barbarians kept the vistas open towards the future inroads from the north. Eutr., X. 3. Pan. Vet., Eum., VI. 10 - 12, Inc., VIII. 22. Three hundred thousand Sarmatians were settled upon the imperial territory. Auct., Const. Mag., ad fin.

Having barely time to celebrate the thirtieth year of his dominion and to receive baptism from Christian hands,[94] Constantine lingered a few months, and died. His Heathen subjects enrolled him amongst their deities.[95] The Christians buried him with honors that might be called divine, had they savored a little less of subjection to mere mortality.[96]

With all their submission, the question of greatest importance to the Christians was still undecided. The council of Nice had declared the Catholic doctrines to be settled beyond the danger of disturbance. But the contrary was proved by the strifes succeeding to the council. Was there to be no peace? If there was not, then there could be no doctrine for the Christians, none for the Empire.

[94] Eus., Vit. Const., IV. 61 – 63.

[95] 337. "Inter Divos meruit referri." Eutr., x. 4. But the Heathen differed in their opinion about him. Compare Praxagoras, in Lardner's Testimonies of Anc. Heath., ch. XLIV. with Zosimus, II. 39.

[96] Eus., Vit. Const., IV. 64 – 67, 69 – 71. Nicephorus Callistus, writing in the fourteenth century, calls Constantine another Apostle, Ἰσαπόστολος. Hist. Eccl., VIII. 1. "E tanto innanzi," says Muratori, Annali d'Italia, tom. II. p. 328, "andò presso i Greci la stima di questo Imperatore, che ne fecero un Santo."

CHAPTER XVII.

ARIAN REACTION.

"What hath man done that man shall not undo?" — Giles Fletcher.

The last honors to Constantine had not yet been rendered, when blood began to be shed amongst his numerous successors. His nephews, Dalmatius and Hannibalianus, were the first to fall. With them perished all but two of the relatives who could claim consideration from the sons of the deceased Emperor. Whether the massacre was ordered or ineffectually prohibited by the sons, one or all,[1] they showed no hesitation in profiting by the removal of their kinsmen. Constantinus claimed possession of Constantinople, while Constantius seized upon Asia Minor, and Constans appropriated to himself the provinces of Eastern Illyria, Thrace and Greece.[2] The eldest of these three brothers was but twenty-five years old. The youngest was but seventeen.

Reigns thus commencing in ignorance and fero-

[1] 337. "Factione Constantii," says Jerome (Chron., Ad Ann. 339), "et tumultu militari." "Incertum quo suasore." Aur. Vict., Cæs., xli. 22.

[2] Aur. Vict., Epit., xli. 10.

city, could not continue without fearful agitations. Constantinus, vexed that he had obtained but little by the murder of his relatives, made an attack upon his brother Constans, and was slain within three years. His dominions fell into the hands of Constans; but he, too, ten years afterwards, was assassinated by his Præfect Magnentius, a mercenary from the North. In the confusion which ensued, the surviving brother, Constantius, was in great danger of being overthrown. But the fortune that had so shaken the house of Constantine was turned in the course of two or three years, when both usurpation and rebellion were put down by the good luck rather than by the able courage of Constantius.[3] He was thirty-five years old when he thus became sole Emperor. Of the two Cæsars spared from the fate of their kinsmen sixteen years before, the elder, by name Gallus, had been proclaimed Cæsar by Constantius. But the seditious projects with which Gallus was charged led to his execution within a very brief period.[4] There still remained his brother, then a student, but afterwards a Cæsar, the famous Julian. With this exception, Constantius had no relatives to assist or to oppose him in his dominion over subjects in part maddened, but in greater part overwhelmed by the exactions and conflicts of their sovereigns.[5]

Such was the reaction, as it may be called, against

[3] Constantinus perished in 340; Constans in 350; Magnentius in 353. Zos., II. 41 *et seq.* Zon., XIII. 6 *et seq.* Eutr., X. 6.

[4] Proclaimed Cæsar in 351, and put to death in 354. Amm. Marc., XIV. 1, 7, 9, 11.

[5] "Ingentes Romani imperii vires ea dimicatione consumtæ sunt." Eutr., X. 6. A terrible description of Constantius and his harpy courtiers is given in Ammianus Marcellinus, XXI. 16, XXII. 4.

the civil policy on which Constantine had rested his hopes of giving renewed stability to the imperial throne. Still more evident was the reaction against his religious policy. In return for the devotion of the prelates at Nice to his behests, Constantine had exalted their authority and raised their creed above all other doctrines or religions in his realms. But he himself had let loose the counter current to his own measures by favoring the Arian leaders in his later years. The stream gathered new fury during the reign of the three sons, still more during that of the survivor who reigned alone.

But the reaction was not entirely confined to the Arian Christians. About the time when Constantine was succeeded by his sons,[6] a Christian of Mesopotamia made himself remarkable for the earnestness with which he urged reform amongst the clergy of his province. Udo, in the Roman tongue Audius, was too severe both in habits and in principles to bear with the pretensions and the excesses of those professed to be his teachers. The higher they were in rank, the deeper appeared to him the disgrace into which they were precipitating themselves and all dependent upon them. Layman though he was, he braved the most towering prelates in their strongholds, charging them with avarice and luxury, sometimes with sin and heinous shame.[7] How just, as well as how bold he was in arraigning them, may

[6] Jerome makes it the year 342. Chron., Ad Ann. Epiphanius says more vaguely "in the time of Arius." Adv. Hær., lib. III. tom. I., LXX. 1.

[7] Theod., Hær. Fab., IV. 10. Epiph., Adv. Hær., lib. III. tom. I., LXX. 1.

be gathered from the fact that they found no other means of averting his rebukes than by excommunicating him. At this, his followers, determined in character, however inconsiderable in number, united in proclaiming him their Bishop. As such, he was ordained by some of the neighboring prelates who had approved his exertions to restrain the extravagance of their colleagues. The more ardently he was supported, the more fiercely was he assailed. Nor was it long before sentence of banishment was obtained against him from the sovereign. Transported beyond the northern frontiers, Udo spent the remainder of his life in working conversions amongst the Gothic tribes of Scythia.[8]

Udo had attempted reaction against the indulgences of the Catholic leaders. The austerities to which many of them inclined were more successfully opposed by a council at Gangra in Asia Minor.[9] It appears from the canons of the council that the spirit against which they were directed had worked strange effects amongst Christians. "He," begins the first canon, "who shall discountenance matrimony or teach the faithful wife that she cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven, let him be anathema."[10] The same judgment is pronounced upon the woman "who from a horror of the marriage-state, deserts her husband,"[11] and upon all "who abandon their children under pretence of devotion."[12] Children are forbidden to neg-

[8] Epiph., Adv. Hær., lib. III. tom. I., LXX. 2 *et seq.*, 14, 15.

[9] The date is uncertain. It was some years before or after the middle of the fourth century.

[10] Conc., tom. II. p. 428.

[11] Can. 14, p. 429.

[12] C. 15.

lect their parents,[13] while slaves are warned against "throwing up their service, and refusing to obey their masters with readiness and with respect."[14] The council is equally earnest in combating the monastic tendencies of the times. "They who should inculcate," declares one of the canons, "disrespect towards the house of God or its assemblies,"[15] "they," declares another, "who shall insult others for making festivals with the brethren, must be anathematized."[16]

It was easier for a council thus to denounce excessive severity, than for a single layman, like Udo of Mesopotamia, to censure excessive licentiousness. But neither Udo nor the council of Gangra could achieve any extensive reaction against the course of the hitherto dominant Christians.

In such a movement, none could act so effectively as the Arian party. Its strength lay in the provinces of Egypt, Syria and Asia Minor, to which succeeded the Emperor Constantius. From him the party soon received proofs of consideration beyond any that Constantine, before dying, had bestowed. The most eminent of the Arian prelates, Eusebius of Nicomedia, was made Primate of Constantinople, where Constantius ruled despite the pretentions of his elder brother to the possession of that great capital.[17] It was something more than exaltation from a lower to a higher see, that took place upon the translation of Eusebius. Amongst the canons adopted by the Catholics at

[13] Can. 16.
[14] C. 3, p. 428.
[15] C. 5.
[16] C. 11, p. 429.
[17] 338 or 339. Soc., II. 7. Soz., III. 4.

Nice, was one forbidding "Bishop, Priest or Deacon to pass from city to city," and pronouncing any ordination that might take place in consequence of such removal to be "entirely null."[18] For Constantius to give, or for Eusebius to accept the episcopal throne at Constantinople was equivalent to a declaration against the great council whose dominion, though occasionally disturbed, had endured for nearly fourteen years. Others were not slow to profit by the imperial favor in declaring the independence which those before them had been obliged to declare under the imperial disfavor. The Emperor now led in the Arian reaction.

Notwithstanding, it was met by the whole strength of the Nicene party. The leader of this was the same whom it had always had, Athanasius, the Primate of Alexandria. The character of this one man seems to show forth all that had provoked, as well as all that was about to resist the reaction of the Arians. His pugnacity and his imperiousness express the strife and the oppression by which the Nicenes had risen. The entire devotedness with which he gave himself to his cause represents the earnestness of his adherents in supporting their faith. As they had reared it against the first onslaught, so would they defend it against the reaction of the Arians. Banished by Constantine, Athanasius was restored by Constantius with whom he had found favor at Treves.[19] He returned as he had gone, the champion of the Nicenes.

[18] C. 16. Conc., tom. II. p. 40.
[19] 338. Athan., Hist. Arian. ad. Mon., 8; Apol. Cont. Arian., 87.

His opponents were all alive. The East rang with their charges and menaces. A number of the clergy in the Alexandrian province united in proclaiming another Primate,[20] on whom ordination was conferred by Secundus of Ptolemais, the faithful adherent of the departed Arius. Against this decisive proceeding, Athanasius convoked the prelates of his own party.[21] By them of course he was upheld. Either his suggestion to them, or theirs to him, of appealing to their colleagues was adopted. A letter was drawn up to claim the countenance of the Catholic Bishops, not only in the East but in the West. Indeed, the appeal was particularly directed to the Western prelates, not yet committed to either side in the Arian controversy. To the Roman Bishop, as the most eminent Bishop of the West, the Alexandrian Primate and his suffragans referred their grievances, demanding the convocation of a council at Rome.[22] No sooner had their adversaries heard of the appeal than they, too, sent their messengers, acquainting the Roman Bishop with the wrongs of which Athanasius had been the author at and since the Nicene council. "We, also," said the Arians, "claim your arbitration."[23]

Julius had been Bishop of Rome upwards of two years,[24] when he received these appeals. Ambition no less than the desire that he may have

[20] By name Pistus. Julius, ap. Athan., Apol. Cont. Arian., 24. Epiph., Adv. Hær., lib. II. tom. II., LXIX. 8.

[21] As many as a hundred assembled. Athan., Apol. Cont. Arian., 1.

[22] Athan., as above, 3–19, 20, and Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 9.

[23] Athan., Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 9; Apol. Cont. Arian., 20.

[24] Elected in 337, a few months before the death of Constantine.

had for the restoration of tranquillity, made him ready to take the part pressed upon him by his Eastern colleagues. But the circumstances and the qualities which determined him to enter into the controversy likewise determined him to maintain the cause of Athanasius. To him Julius replied that a council should be called wherever he pleased.[25] Nor was it apparently, until he heard from Athanasius, that Julius returned an answer to the letters of the Arians, directing them to repair to Rome.

Naturally enough, the Arians would have nothing to do with a council, of which they could thus foresee the issue against them. At the instance of Eusebius, Primate of Constantinople, the Emperor Constantius summoned the prominent Bishops in his dominions to meet at Antioch, where a church, begun by Constantine, was at this time to be dedicated.[26] Whatever ceremonies were performed, they were soon displaced by discussions of the measures which it behoved the Arian leaders to take against the procedures of their antagonists in the West.

It was resolved to frame a statement of their doctrine, whereby it might be seen, throughout the Christian world, that they were in all respects Catholics. That they differed from the Nicene party, then monopolizing the Catholic name, was not attempted to be concealed. But the difference was emphatically declared to consist of the single word Con-

[25] Athan., Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 9. [26] 341. Soc., II. 8.

substantiality, in support of which the Nicenes had nothing to adduce against the Arians besides decrees of councils and of sovereigns. From this position, however, the Arians at Antioch dislodged themselves by violence against their opponents. Athanasius was singled out as the object not only of the most opprobrious detraction, but of the most vindictive persecution. A new Primate was appointed for Alexandria, whither he was enjoined by the council, and enabled by the Emperor to proceed with troops and plans of cruel devastations.[27]

Athanasius immediately fled to Rome. The council which he had demanded some months before was already summoned. It met soon after his arrival,[28] not to judge the question between him and his persecutors, but to assert his superiority. "His presence," says the Bishop of Rome himself, "put us all to shame, making us feel how he had come, trusting in his own cause." The decision of a body so easily overborne was readily given in favor of Athanasius and of the other Bishops whom the Arian party had expelled from their sees.[29]

The appeal of Athanasius was not the only one which the Bishop Julius had laid before his council at Rome. On the elevation of Eusebius to the primacy of Constantinople, the Emperor Constantius had ordered Paul, the Primate of the Nicene party,

[27] On the council and the career of Gregory of Cappadocia, the newly appointed Primate, see Soc., II. 9, 10; Athan., Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 9 *et seq.*; Ep. Encycl., 2 *et seq.* This was in 341 and 342.

[28] 342. About fifty Bishops were present. Athan., Apol. Cont. Arian., 20; Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 15.

[29] Athan., Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 15; Apol. Cont. Arian., 20.

into exile.[30] Eusebius dying in the year after the council of Antioch, Paul contrived to make his way back to Constantinople, but not in season to prevent the election of the Arian Macedonius.[31] A war, as the historian styles it, arose, filling the streets as well as the churches of the capital with tumults and murders. Constantius, then at Antioch, ordered one of his highest officers, Hermogenes, to see that Paul was straightway expelled from Constantinople. Instead of being obeyed by a trembling prelate or a submissive congregation, Hermogenes was attacked and slain by the people, whose sympathies were chiefly with the Nicene party.[32] Constantius heard the unwonted intelligence with all the passionate amazement of an imperious sovereign accustomed to abject submission from his subjects. Hastening in person to Constantinople, he not only drove out Paul, but deprived the populace, by whom the offending prelate had been supported, of their usual largesses of grain. Paul went at once to Rome, where his cause was espoused in the same spirit as was that of Athanasius.[33]

By the proceedings at Rome, the influential prelates of the West were virtually committed to the Nicene party. Letters from the Roman Julius to the Eastern Arians exposed the resolution of the Western Catholics to act against them as their own opponents. The despatches containing these mo-

[30] 339. Soc., II. 7. Soz., III. 4. Athan., Hist. Arian ad Mon., 7.

[31] 342. Soc., II. 12. Soz., III. 7.

[32] Soc., II. 13. Soz., III. 7.

[33] Soc., II. 15. Soz., III. 8. The mention of his exile by Athanasius (Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 7) does not disprove his flight to Rome.

mentous tidings ordered the Arian leaders not only to make way for the prelates whom they had deposed, but, further, to transport themselves to Rome, where Julius claimed the right to judge them.[34] It needed no more to quicken the reaction already begun against the policy adopted at Nice and now disseminated throughout the Empire.

Assembled in their stronghold at Antioch, the Arian prelates composed their reply to Julius and his colleagues of the West. "They confess," says the historian by whom the substance of the reply has been preserved, "the eminence of the Roman Church, as one that had been founded by Apostles, although its founders and its teachers were to be recollected as having gone to it from the East. At the same time, they admit no obligation on their part to take the second place, because their churches were less vast or less numerous, unless they were likewise surpassed in virtues and in purposes. Then upbraiding Julius for having admitted Athanasius to his communion, they complain especially of the insult that had been offered to their council at Antioch by setting aside its decision, in opposition to every ecclesiastical precedent. Having thus made their complaints, and shown that they had suffered greatly, they offer peace and communion to Julius, on condition of his acquiescence in the deposition of those whom they had removed and in the substitution of those whom they had ordained. Should he oppose their measures, they forewarned him of resistance on their part; and

[34] Soc., II. 15. Soz., III. 8.

vainly, they said, had his predecessors essayed to control the Bishops of the East. . . . . As for their acting in contradiction to the canons of those who had assembled at Nice, they attempted no defence. They showed, indeed, that they had many reasons to adduce in explanation of their course; but to defend themselves on that score was not, they said, their intention, so long as they conceived themselves to be in all respects unjustly treated."[35] Much of heat as there may have been in this communication, it was a grave plea in favor of the Arians.

All the great cities of the Empire were now convulsed with the Arian reaction. So violent were the passions of the contending parties at Constantinople, that the ejection of Paul, after his return in triumph from the Roman council, could not be openly effected even by the Præfect of the East.[36] When the Nicene Primate had been secretly removed, the Arian Primate, Macedonius, was taken into the chariot of the Præfect, who, surrounded by armed men, proceeded to the principal church of the capital. But entrance was not effected without disturbance; nor did the greater portion of the multitude, Arians or Nicenes, collected in the edifice, ever come out alive.[37] The horrors of that day were terrible omens of the coming years.

The Nicene party was in no wise disposed to re-

[35] Soz., III. 8. Socrates (II. 15) mentions the reply. The rejoinder of Julius, by which the report of Sozomen is fully substantiated, may be found ap. Athan., Apol. Cont. Arian., 21–35.

[36] 343. Soc., II. 16.

[37] "Three thousand one hundred and fifty are said to have fallen, some by the hands of the soldiers, others by the pressure of the throng." Soc., II. 16.

linquish its supremacy. Five years after the Roman council, while Paul and Athanasius were both in exile, a council was convened by imperial edict[38] at Sardica in Mœsia. Its members were summoned from all directions and from both the contending parties. Arians and Nicenes, Western and Eastern prelates, were at last gathered into the same assembly. But the hope that anything peaceful could come out of such a meeting was utterly fallacious. Appeals from the Nicene Catholics had led to the convocation of the council. Under their management, its sessions were opened with Athanasius sitting as a member, while Hosius of Cordova officiated as the presiding officer.

The Arians, finding themselves in the minority, withdrew to Philippopolis in Thrace,[39] where the creed adopted some years before at Antioch was solemnly reiterated. Tidings soon reached the seceders that the Nicenes, left to themselves at Sardica, had not only reinstated all who had been deposed by the Arians, but fulminated sentences of deposition against all the Arian leaders. Amongst these Ursacius of Singidunum and Valens of Mursa were at this time prominent.[40] Thereupon the council at Philippopolis, claiming to be the true council of Sardica, returned anathemas against Hosius and Athanasius,

[38] 347. The Emperor Constans originated the call in the West. It was repeated in the East by Constantius. Athan., Apol. Cont. Arian., 1, 36. So the letter of the council., ib., 44.

[39] The object being to get out of the dominions of Constans, by whom the Nicene party was supported, into those of Constantius.

[40] Athan., Apol. Cont. Arian., 36, and the letters of the council, ib., 37–50. Hilar., Hist., Frag., II. 1 *et seq.* Soc., II. 20. Soz., III. 12.

together with others against Julius, Paul and the rest of the leading Nicenes.[41] "From this time," says the ancient historian, "the Occidentals, up to Thrace, and the Orientals, up to Illyria, were sundered from one another's communion."[42]

The scission between the Eastern and the Western Christians did not altogether result from differences of doctrine. A tendency had long been noticeable in the West to create a central power under which it was believed that the scattered Churches of the Christians could be more securely organized. True it was that the tendency had been combated by many of the ablest leaders amongst the Western Christians. Nor had the experiences of later generations contributed to increase the earlier propensities for any ecclesiastical centralization. But the idea had always remained, the more naturally in consequence of the position held by the Roman Bishop amongst his Western colleagues. To turn his throne into one before which all Christians would bow, needed but few words, it seemed, or, at the most, but few favoring circumstances. These circumstances arose with the struggle between Athanasius and his opponents in the East. Thence, though the idea of the Roman supremacy had obtained no footing there, appeals to the judgment of Julius then came from both sides. The withdrawal of the Arian appellants was dictated not so much by the love of independence as by the fear of adverse measures. But their bold protest

[41] Hil., Hist., Frag., III. 1 *et seq.* Soc., II. 20. Soz., III. 11.

[42] Soz., III. 13.

against the pretensions of the Roman prelate followed; and when they met with his adherents at Sardica, one of the chief points at issue related to his supremacy over the Christian world. The Arians acted out their previous rejection of it by leaving the council where it was maintained.

At the proposal of Hosius, the presiding prelate of the Nicenes, a canon was adopted, declaring it within the power of every Bishop to appeal from the sentence of his colleagues in synod assembled "to Julius the Bishop of Rome."[43] The terms of the canon were obviously suggested by the circumstances which had obliged Athanasius and his fellow-exiles to throw themselves upon the support of the Roman Bishop. But it was not intended that the privilege of appeal should last no longer than the present strife continued, much less that it should cease with the life of Julius to whom the appellants were particularly directed. Neither was it the purpose of the council to establish the appeal merely as a right of the Bishops who might find it convenient to claim the assistance of a more powerful prelate than themselves. On the contrary, the Bishop of Cordova brought forward his measure as "an act of reverence towards the memory of the Apostle Peter," whose successor he evidently conceived to possess the right of exercising authority over his colleagues.[44] Gaudentius, the Bishop of

[43] C. 3. Conc., tom. II. pp. 659, 660.

[44] As is more definitely stated in an extract from the letter of the council to Julius. "Hoc enim optimum et valde congruentissimum esse videbitur si ad caput, id est, ad Petri Apostoli sedem de singulis quibusque provinciis Domini referent sacerdotes." Ap. Hil., Hist., Frag., II.

Naissus in Mœsia, followed up the canon of Hosius by proposing that no one should be substituted in the place of a deposed prelate, "until the Bishop of Rome could take cognizance of the case."[45] Hosius then offered another canon, authorizing the Roman Bishop to interpose in controversies between his colleagues at a distance, "by sending Presbyters of his own church" to conduct the necessary examinations.[46] From that day forward, the supremacy of the Roman Bishop was recognized by a large number of those who had hitherto been his equal colleagues.

This was the first great effect of the Arian reaction in the ten years succeeding to Constantine's death. In dispossessing the Nicene Catholics of their exclusive favor with the sovereign, the Arians drove them to the establishment of an ecclesiastical power, from which it seemed to be believed that a support equivalent to the imperial protection could be obtained. So that there were now two parties, both seeking the countenance of the Emperor,[47] and one endeavoring to exalt a second sovereign in the Bishop of Rome. In producing such an effect, the Arian reaction increased the wrongs that men were inflicting upon the principles by which their Saviour had called them unto liberty.

A single party, long since separated from the Catholics, still professed to be independent. From the

[45] C. 4. Conc., tom. II. pp. 659, 660.

[46] C. 5.

[47] Although both made a show of pronouncing against such a dependence. Conc. Antioch., c. 11, 12, pp. 589, 592. Conc. Sardic., c. 7, 8, 9, pp. 662, 663. Ap. Conc., tom. II.

time that Constantine forbade the persecution of the Donatists, they had held fast to their peculiar tenets, aloof alike from the Nicenes and from the Arians.

It was soon after the scission took place at Sardica that an effort was made on both sides to obtain the coöperation of the Donatists. The Arians were content to send letters and messengers of their own.[48] But the Nicenes appear to have prevailed upon the Emperor[49] to despatch two commissioners[50] to the African province, with directions to distribute alms amongst all the churches in which the feuds of former years continued. Donatus of Carthage, still at the head of the party bearing his name, rejected the proffered bounties of the imperial envoys. "What," he cried, "has the Emperor to do with the Church? We, at least, will have nothing to do with his largesses!"[51] Nor did the commissioners succeed even in appearing to execute the commands of their sovereign, until the majority of the Donatist leaders were exiled or massacred.[52] When this was done, the submissive Donatists and the Catholics met together in council to hear the Carthaginian Bishop, the head of the African Churches, give "thanks to the Omnipotent God and to Jesus Christ for having restored to the Church its scattered members."[53]

For a moment, the Catholics triumphed throughout

[48] 348. Ap. Hil., Hist., Frag., III. 1 *et seq.* See Augustin., Ep. 44.

[49] Constans still reigning in the West.

[50] "Famulos Dei," says Gratus, the Bishop of Carthage, "Paulum et Macarium." Conc., tom. II. p. 747.

[51] "Quid est Imperatori cum Ecclesia?" Opt., De Schism. Don., III. 3.

[52] Id., ib., 1 *et seq.*

[53] Conc., tom. II. p. 747.

the Empire. Even the Emperor Constantius transferred to them, that is, to the Nicenes, the grace which he had been lavishing upon the Arians. Such of the Nicene leaders as had been deposed by their adversaries, were restored to their respective sees;[54] while such of the Arians as had distinguished themselves in the recent hostilities were forced or were induced to abjure their principles.[55] But the revival of the Nicene influence was for a moment, and no more. The years ensuing upon these events were crowded with perils to Constantius, to whom his brother's throne was left in the midst of sedition and bloodshed. It is still to be read how the Emperor retreated from the battle-field near Mursa to the church where the Arian Bishop Valens announced victory.[56] When the victory was gained, and Constantius became sole Emperor, he was the confirmed patron of his Arian subjects. The forms of the sovereign and the leading combatants amongst the Christians fill up the whole foreground in the histories of the period.

Hardly had Constantius secured his dominion over the East and the West, when he summoned a council of the contending parties. He did so at the request of Liberius, then Bishop of Rome.[57] But instead of appointing a place of meeting in Italy, the Emperor required the prelates indicated in his

[54] His letters and the letter of Bishop Julius on the occasion are in Athanasius's Apol. Cont. Arian., 51 *et seq.* See Soc., II. 23.

[55] The letters of Valens and Ursacius are given by Athanasius, as above, 58, 59. See Soc., II. 24.

[56] Declaring "angelum sibi fuisse nuntium." Sulp. Sev., II. p. 291.

[57] Succeeding to Julius in 352.

summons to meet him at Arles in Gaul. There the decision of six years before at Sardica was reversed by condemning the Nicene leaders to submit to the sentences pronounced against them by their Arian opponents.[58]

No blow could have been severer upon the Nicene Catholics than one thus received from the Western provinces, the very quarter where lay their strength and trust. They understood it so; and the principal members of their party preferred their demands through Liberius of Rome, that a new council should be instantly summoned by the Emperor.[59] The Arians were equally eager to pursue the triumph which, in their eyes, was but begun at Arles.[60] A number of the Eastern Bishops, with as many as three hundred of their Western antagonists, obeyed the Emperor's orders to repair to Milan, where he was then residing.[61] Liberius committed the interests of his party to Lucifer of Cagliari, whose most influential coadjutors were Hosius of Cordova, Paulinus of Treves, Eusebius of Vercelli, and Dionysius of Milan. It no longer needed the presence of the remoter Arians to give their party the majority. All their more zealous leaders, like Valens and Ursacius, came resolved to carry their cause with their sovereign's aid over every obstacle that might be placed in its way. The wildest disorders occurring at earlier councils were calm compared

[58] 353. The condemnation was directed against Athanasius in particular. Sulp. Sev., II. p. 291.

[59] 354. Ap. Hil., Hist., Frag., v. 1 *et seq.*

[60] Theod., II. 15.

[61] 355. Soc., II. 36. Soz., IV. 9.

with the tempests which arose amongst Bishops and courtiers, the soldiers and the populace, at Milan. At length, a creed, drawn up in the form of an imperial edict, according, as it was said, to instructions which Constantius had received in a vision, was presented to the Nicenes. No sooner were its contents made known, than Lucifer of Cagliari, the virtual representative of the Roman Bishop, sprang up to denounce the terms in which the Arians proposed to adjust the controverted doctrines. "It is a sacrilege, an impious sacrilege!" cried the Bishop. "And though all the armies of the Empire," he added, "were banded against me, I would hold it in utter scorn and execration!" At this, the Emperor himself, who had been listening in concealment, darted out amongst the startled Bishops, shouting to Lucifer that he was a villain, and that neither he nor his colleagues had been called to dictate to the imperial will.[62] Turning to the rest of the assembly, he ordered them to submit at once to the edict, and to unite their voices with his in excommunicating Athanasius, together with all of the same opinions. But several of the Nicene prelates rose by turns to remonstrate in behalf of their absent brethren, "using great boldness," says Athanasius in his account of the scene, "and warning the Emperor against disturbing the Church or intruding the imperial authority into the ecclesiastical government."[63] It was much too late, however,

[62] All this is related by Lucifer himself. Mor pro Dei Fil. Lib., ad init., and Pro Sancto Athan., lib. I., II.

[63] Athan., Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 34.

for such a warning to come from the lips of the Nicenes.

Constantius, losing all control of himself, drew his sword, and ordered the resisting prelates to immediate execution. The next instant, changing his mind, he condemned some of them to expulsion from the council and others to banishment. Bishop Lucifer, with the ecclesiastics representing the Roman Bishop, was amongst the first to be removed; Dionysius, Eusebius and Paulinus being sent each to a different place of exile.[64] Nor did it satisfy the Arians, or their vindictive sovereign, to banish the offending members of the council. All of the same party, whether leaders or followers, from one end to the other of the Empire, were indirectly if not directly assailed by their exulting opponents. Scenes occurred at Alexandria, as fearful as those at Milan, although it was not the Emperor, but his agents or his troops who drew their weapons against the adherents of Athanasius. The fourth Primate whom the Arians had sent to Alexandria within twenty years, headed the array of persecutors.[65]

At Rome the bodily sufferings[66] of the Nicenes were outdone by the mental tortures which most of them experienced from the abject recantation of their Bishop Liberius. Banished soon after the council of

[64] Athan., Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 33, 34.

[65] George of Cappadocia, the fourth Arian Primate, counting Eusebius of Emesa, who did not, however, accept the office. Athan., Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 47 *et seq.*; Apol. de Fuga, 6 *et seq.*

[66] Anastas., De Vit. Rom. Pont., 37. Athan., Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 38.

Milan, he bore up but for a few months,[67] before stooping to renounce the communion of Athanasius for that of the Arians.[68] Hosius of Cordova was at first sent home to his diocese, perhaps as to the most befitting exile for a prelate who had spent his life in councils and at courts. But on his continued refusal to unite with the Arians, he was recalled to the imperial residence, where, at the close of his life, he abjured the cause to which his life had been devoted.[69]

All the while, every class composing the Nicene party was more or less involved in the calamities to which their most eminent leaders succumbed. "What Church," cried the chief of the Nicenes, "can now worship Christ in liberty? . . . . It is the coming of Anti-Christ that Constantius doth thus prepare!"[70] If ever Christians had been oppressed, the Nicenes were then.

The first to utter what was in the hearts of all appears to have been Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers in Gaul. Not yet exiled, but grieving the more for those who were, Hilary appealed directly to the Emperor. "May thy benignity," begins the prelate, "may thy clemency which thou derivest from thy father, O most blessed Sovereign, unite in granting our desires! We beseech thee not merely with

[67] Athanasius (Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 41) says μετὰ διετῆ χρόνον, after two years' time. Therefore in 357.

[68] Id., ib. Hil., Hist., Frag., VI. 5 *et seq.*

[69] Also in 357. "Post longum senium venustatis, id est, post centesimum primum annum, in ipso jam limine vitæ, a fidei limitibus subruens." Isidor., De Vir. Ill., 5. Athan., Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 42–45.

[70] Athan., Hist. Arian. ad Mon., 46, 53.

words, but with tears likewise, that our Catholic Churches may be no longer harassed by these most terrible wrongs, no longer exposed to these intolerable persecutions and contumelies from our brethren. . . . . Nor let thy officers," he adds like an earnest advocate of ecclesiastical independence, "hereafter presume to decide the causes in which the clergy have a share, or allow themselves to bruise and torment the innocent with their insults, threats, violences, and terrors."[71] For thus protesting against the oppressions that had crushed his party to the dust, Hilary was banished at the first convenient opportunity.[72]

At about the same time, Athanasius addressed an Apology, as it was styled, to the Emperor. "Answering for himself," he made by no means so striking a protest as that which his colleague of Poitiers had offered for others. His tone is rather adroit than solemn. "If thou wilt not investigate the affair," writes the Alexandrian, "it would be but just that we who defend ourselves should be believed rather than they who accuse us. They are laboring merely as enemies to us. We bring forward our proofs in behalf of the cause for which we are contending. And I marvel that while we are addressing thee with due reverence, they should proceed to such an extreme of irreverence as to lie even to their Emperor. . . . . They have dared to charge us with even this, that I have disobeyed thy commands. . . . . But I did not. . . . . God forbid!

[71] Ad Constantium, lib. I. cap. 1.
[72] At the council of Beziers in 356. Conc., tom. II. p. 843.

I am not a man who would resist even the City Quæstor, much less so great a sovereign as thou!"[73] The strain becomes still more artificial towards the conclusion. "Thanks be to the Lord," exclaims Athanasius, "who hath given thee this sovereignty. Inasmuch as all are to be enlightened concerning thy humanity as well as concerning the wickedness of those on whose account I fled at first. For thus am I able to utter these things to thee, thus art thou able to discover him towards whom thy humanity should be extended. I call upon thee, therefore, to receive this my apology. Restore to their homes and to their churches our Bishops and our other clergy, that the malignity of my accusers may be made manifest!"[74]

The freedom which Athanasius seems to have lacked was redundant in Lucifer, the Bishop of Cagliari. Banished from Milan to Germany, and driven hence from place to place, as far as Syria, the fiery Sardinian was excited to the very verge of madness. After writing on the defensive until his moderation was entirely exhausted, Lucifer assumed the offensive not only against the Arians, but against the Emperor. "I have desired," says the fearless prelate, in a treatise Concerning Apostate Sovereigns, addressed to Constantius, "to show forth the deeds of a few rulers equal to thee in apostasy and cruelty, so that thou canst no longer repeat that saying of thine, 'Were not the creed of Arius, that is, my own, Catholic, were it not

[73] Apol. ad Const., 13, 19. [74] Ib., 35.

God's pleasure that I should persecute the creed which they got up against us at Nice, I should not, surely, be still strong in my dominion.' . . . . . Thou didst fall," declared Lucifer, "on that day when thou didst deny the Son of God."[75] "Yet thou hast fancied that thy murderous right hand should grasp thy sword, as if with the sword thou couldst conquer those whom thou beholdest neither fearing to lose their present life nor dreading death for the Son of God! . . . . Consider that thou, with all thy sublimity, wilt perish like smoke, unless thou dost reform thyself, as the enemy of God! . . . . Woe to thee, homicide and sacrilegious man, unless thou shalt repent of thy deeds!"[76] Even bolder language is employed. "By thy fruits," exclaims Lucifer, "O Emperor Constantius, art thou known to be no Christian, but a chief of murderers. . . . . Save thyself, Constantius, from this snare of the Arian madness, lest thou suffer eternal punishment with thy fellow-blasphemers. Do not boast of thy vanishing dignity. Regard thyself as mortal, for thou canst never obtain immortality but by knowing God and doing His will."[77] "And dost thou call us contumacious," perseveres the Bishop, "because we follow in the way of the Apostles, and regard thee as a sinner? . . . . How, I ask, shall we resist the devil, if we do not oppose thee, in whom he hath armed himself for our destruction?"[78] "And if in this contest it befall us to be

[75] De Reg. Apost., ad init., and ad fin.

[76] Pro Athan., lib. I. pp. 823, 851, 872, ed Migne.

[77] Ib., lib. II. pp. 882, 883.

[78] De non Parcendo in Deum Deliquentes, pp. 973, 985.

slain by thy murderous hand for the sake of the Son of God, we shall bear up firmly and with a devout spirit against thy madness. He for whom we suffer will conquer in us!"[79]

Before these bold appeals were completed, Hilary of Poitiers had again spoken out from his wiser heart. Addressing himself to Constantius, he declared his innocence of any crime for which he could justly be condemned.[80] "And all of us," he urged, "are conscious of having upheld nothing but the faith since it was declared by the council at Nice."[81] Vainly as the earnest Nicene pleaded, he soon renewed his efforts in a Tract not now to, but against Constantius. "It is time to speak," he cries, "for the time to keep silence is gone by. . . . . We are contending with a persecutor who deceives us, with an enemy who beguiles us, with the Anti-Christ Constantius." So much had the wisdom of Hilary yielded to the provocations of oppression. "And I proclaim to thee," he continued, "O Constantius, what I would have said to Nero, what Decius and Maximin would have heard from me. Thou art fighting against God, — thou art raging against His Church, — thou art angered against His saints, — thou art inflamed against the preachers of Christ — thou art a destroyer of religion, — thou art a tyrant, not merely over human affairs, but likewise over those which are Divine!"[82]

Such being the words employed by the Nicene

[79] Moriendum esse pro Dei Filio, p. 1014.

[80] Ad Constantium, lib. II. 1, 2.

[81] "Conscii enim nobis invicem sumus, post Nicæni Conventus Synodum, nihil aliud quam fidem scribi." Ib., 5.

[82] Contra Constantium, 1, 5, 7.

champions against their sovereign, those directed by them against their fellow-subjects were still more vindictive. "The contagion of Arianism is pestiferous," exclaimed Hilary in his first and most temperate appeal.[83] "I am a Christian," he says, "not an Arian."[84] "They who call the Arians Christians," writes Athanasius, "do very much and very greatly err."[85] "It is the devil," cry out Eusebius of Vercelli and Hilary of Poitiers, "who hath inflamed these Arian madmen against us."[86]

In the passions indicated by this language, the second great effect of the Arian reaction upon the Nicene Catholics stood revealed. To uphold the law of love, hatred and violence were now the accepted means amongst those who professed the deepest devotion to the principles of Christian faith and Christian freedom. As Hilary himself confessed, "whilst we battle about words and one of us becomes anathema to the other, there is almost no one who gives himself to Christ."[87]

Meanwhile, the reaction in favor of the Arians had attained to its greatest degree. After various efforts to decide upon differences which had arisen amongst his favorite party, Constantius resolved to convoke a general council at Nice, the same city in which the Nicene Catholics had won their name.[88] In consequence partly of intrigues and partly of designed emergencies, the council was divided into

[83] "Ariana et pestifera contagione inquinati." Ad Const., I. 3.

[84] "Christianus sum, non Arianus." Ib., I. 2.

[85] Orat. I. Cont. Arian., 1. So passim.

[86] "Diabolus inflammavit adversus nos Arriomanitas suos." Eus., Epist., ap. Bibl. de la Bigne, tom. I. p. 482. So Hil., De Syn., 1.

[87] "Prope jam nemo Christi est." Ad Const., II. 5.

[88] Soz., IV. 16.

two, one of Eastern prelates at Seleucia in Asia Minor, the other of Western prelates at Rimini in Italy.[89] In both, the first decisions were against the strictly Arian party. But in both, it was finally agreed that the Nicene creed, as well as all variations of the Arian creed, should be abandoned.[90] The following year witnessed a great gathering of the victorious Arians at Constantinople. The few who refused adhesion to the creeds adopted at the recent councils were condemned, while the great majority acquiesced in the establishment of the Arian doctrines. Among those who took part in the council at Constantinople was Ulphilas, a Bishop of the Goths.[91] "The whole world," in the language of Jerome, "beheld itself Arian."[92]

Thus was undone by men what had been done by men at Nice, five and thirty years before.[93] Had the liberty of the Christians depended upon the Nicene creed, it would have been swept away. But as it sprang from the Gospel of the Lord and the Saviour, it was spared.

[89] 359. Athan., De Syn. Arim. et Sel., 1. Hil., Hist, Frag., VII. 1 *et seq.*

[90] Athan., De Syn. Arim. et Sel. Hil., Hist., Frag., VIII. 1 – 3, IX. 1 *et seq.* Soc., II. 37, 39 *et seq.* Soz., IV. 16 *et seq.* Theod., II. 18 *et seq.*

[91] 360. Soc., II. 41. Soz., IV. 24 *et seq.* Theod., II. 27, 28.

[92] "Tunc Nicenæ fidei damnatio conclamata est. Ingemuit totus orbis et Arianum se esse miratus est." Hier., Adv. Lucif., tom. IV. Pars II. p. 300. So in his Chron., Ad Ann. 361.

[93] "'Tis won, as towns with fire; so won, so lost."
Love's Labor Lost.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HEATHEN REACTION.

"Know, courts and winds have oft sithes varied:
Keep well your course, and rule your rudder;
And think with kings ye are not married."

QUINTYN SCHAW.

MEANWHILE the fortunes of the Christians beyond the frontiers were sinking amidst Heathen persecution. Believers amongst the Northern tribes were never long secure against the suspicions of their kindred or the caprices of their chieftains. In the East, the Christians of Persia repeatedly suffered from the oppression which their superiors were trained to exercise from generation to generation. Shaypoor, the king contemporary with Constantine, led in a systematic onslaught upon the converts to the religion that had issued from the imperial realms.[1] Constantine at once interfered, and perhaps with some success.[2] But it was reserved for his son, Constantius, to bear as well as to witness the effects of Shaypoor's undying enmity towards all associated with his foes of Rome. The eastern provinces were then

[1] Assemanni (Acta Mart. Orient. et Occident., Pars I. p. 215) assigns the first on his list of Persian persecutions to the year 327.

[2] His letter to Shaypoor is in Eus., Vit. Const., IV. 9–13.

invaded by the Persian forces, at the same time that the Christians of the Persian territory were plundered, butchered and well nigh exterminated.[3] Nor could the memory of many unflinching martyrs prevent the progress of Christianity from being effectually arrested in the farther East.

As if to counterbalance the attacks of Heathen in foreign lands, the imperial sovereigns lent their aid to various assaults upon their Heathen subjects. Not more than four years after Constantine's death, his two surviving sons united in promulgating an edict against the sacrifices which their father had vainly prohibited.[4] From the terms of another decree, it would appear that the temples within the walls of Rome were dismantled or turned to some new uses.[5] The same transformation must have occurred in other places. A third edict commands temples everywhere to be closed, and the sacrifices of which they had been the scenes to be wholly abandoned under pain of death.[6] The fact that such injunctions could not be carried out,[7] takes away nothing from their significance as proofs of the imperial determination to put down the Heathen religion. Nor were the Christian subjects behindhand in ap-

[3] The date of the decisive persecution is usually assigned to 343. Ruinart, Acta Mart., tom. III. p. 307. On the martyrs, see Id., ib., pp. 311 *et seq.*; Assemanni, Mart. Orient. et Occident., Pars I. pp. 1 *et seq.*

[4] "Cesset superstitio, sacrificiorum aboleatur insania." Cod. Theod., lib. XVI. tit. X. 2.

[5] Ib., ib., 3.

[6] "Placuit omnibus locis atque urbibus universis claudi protenus templa, et accessu vetitis omnibus licentiam delinquendi perditis abnegari. Volumus etiam cunctos sacrificiis abstinere." Ib., ib., 4. To the same effect are the following laws, 5, 6.

[7] The code itself (lib. XII. tit. I. 46) proves it. See Beugnot, Destruct. du Paganisme, tom. I. pp. 138 *et seq.*

plauding the measures of their sovereigns against the Heathen. Some, indeed, were content to join with Athanasius in pitying those who could not yet perceive that the world was subdued to the power of the Cross.[8] But more would unite with Firmicus Maternus in calling down the imperial vengeance upon "the omnifarious forms of idolatry" with which the Christians were still surrounded.[9]

Despite all clamor of the subject, all menace of the sovereign, a multitude of votaries still sought the ancient altars. Some came in faith. Others were but imitating their ancestors. A still larger number clung to the Heathen ritual as to the only support of their trade or their art, of their science or their philosophy. Whatever might be the motives of the Heathen, they were strengthened rather than weakened amidst the uproar arising against those by whom they were entertained.

The edicts against Heathenism had long been issued when the rhetorician Marius Victorinus came from Africa to Rome.[10] Welcomed not only as a teacher of rhetoric, but as a champion of Heathenism, Victorinus soon rose to the height of favor amongst the Heathen leaders of the imperial city. By some means not related, he was persuaded to read the Scriptures and the Christian writings.

[8] Ἐφ' ᾧ μάλιστα καὶ τὴν ἀναισθησίαν αὐτῶν οἰκτειρήσειεν ἄν τις. Orat. Cont. Gent., 1.

[9] "Sed et vobis, sacratissimi imperatores," says the fiery Christian, "ad vindicandum et puniendum hoc malum necessitas imperatur, et hoc vobis Dei Summi lege præcipitur, ut severitas vestra idololatriæ facinus omnifarium persequatur." De Errore Prof. Relig., p. 467, ed. Lugd.

[10] Jerome (Chron., Ad Ann. 355) speaks of Victorinus as then flourishing at Rome.

Too far advanced in age and too carefully disciplined in mind to yield to any momentary impulses, the rhetorician studied, pondered, and finally confessed to a Christian friend that he, too, was a believer. The doubt between one faith and the other was not so severe with Victorinus as the struggle ensuing between his attachment to the dignity which he held as a Heathen and his aversion to the lowliness which he was to hold as a Christian. The upturned faces of his hearers must have every day increased his reluctance to dismiss them; nor could he suddenly surrender the honors paid him, not more by the kindred of his pupils, than by the most eminent of their fellow-believers.

The friend to whom Victorinus had confided his secret besought him to unite himself with the Christians. But the old rhetorician hesitated, until, at length, his convictions prevailed over his apprehensions. Bold, as the narrator writes, against vanity and humble in presence of the truth, Victorinus went to one of the Roman churches, and there declared himself converted. As eager to hasten, as he had before been desirous to defer his confession, he asked soon afterwards to be baptized. Already had his first step created a great excitement amongst the upbraiding Heathen and the applauding Christians. But when the day of his baptism arrived, the public sensation so much increased, that the clergy proposed to have the ceremony performed in private. He manfully refused. "It was not salvation," he said, "that he had taught as a rhetorician, and yet he had not feared to teach in public. He would not fear, now

that he was to repeat the word of God." Accordingly, the baptism took place in public amidst the universal rejoicings of the Christians who thronged the church to behold and to hear their illustrious convert.[11] The exultation of the people, the hesitancy of the clergy concerning the public baptism, and the trepidation of Victorinus himself at the time of his conversion, bear witness to the hold which Heathenism still maintained.

The reign of Constantius drew to an end under threatening omens. Not only were the Persians invading the Roman realms,[12] but on the northern, the north-western and the western borders, enemies were gathering in increased numbers and with greatly increased successes.[13] Strangers were taken as recruits to the imperial guards.[14] To strangers likewise were given places of the highest authority, both in the civil and in the military service of the Empire.[15] The overthrow of the system upreared by Constantine seemed close at hand.

Darker still were the prognostics that could be drawn concerning the successor to the reigning Emperor. So much had he disappointed many of the

[11] Augustine gives the whole narration at the beginning of the eighth book of his Confessions. On the Christian writings of Victorinus, see Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 101.

[12] An account of the later campaigns may be found in Zosimus, III. 8 *et seq.*, or in Ammianus Marcellinus, XVIII. 4 *et seq.*, XIX. 1 *et seq.*, XX. 6 *et seq.*

[13] "Cum multa oppida barbari expugnassent, alia obsiderent, ubique fœda vastitas esset, Romanumque imperium non dubia jam calamitate nutaret." Eutr., X. 6. So Zos., III. 1 *et seq.*

[14] "Francis, quorum ea tempestate in palatio multitudo florebat." Amm. Marc., XV. 5.

[15] Besides Magnentius, already mentioned, there was the much honored and the much injured Silvanus. Aur. Vict., Epit., XLII. 11, Cæs., XLII. 14–16. Amm. Marc., XV. 5, 6.

Christians, so much had he incensed the whole of the Heathen, that there were few on either side who did not wait for an avenger. Whoever should appear upon the throne was sure of finding hosts of those around it or of those beneath it prepared to applaud any measures adopted against their adversaries. They who had the largest number of adversaries, they, therefore, who had the strongest desires for reactionary measures, were the Heathen. Their eagerness for a new sovereign would be all the more intense on account of the poor consideration in which they held Constantius. His virtues, in their eyes, consisted in attempts at magnificence and learning, of which the ill-success was counterbalanced only by his proficiency in diet, exercise and sleep. As for his religion, he was regarded as having "confounded the simplicity of the Christian faith with old women's superstitions, by investigating which with greater zeal than he showed in removing them, he excited countless quarrels. He actually went so far as to promote dissensions by transporting loads of priests hither and thither throughout his realms. . . . . Right and wrong he jumbled with a cruelty surpassing that of Caligula, Domitian or Commodus."[16] The successor for whom the Heathen longed was not far off.

To meet the dangers accumulating in the northern provinces, Constantius raised his only surviving male relative, Julian, to the rank of Cæsar, and gave him his sister's hand in marriage.[17] The campaigns

[16] Amm. Marc., xxi. 16.

[17] 355. Amm. Marc., xv. 8. Zos., iii. 2.

of six successive years[18] were so conducted by Julian or by his officers, as to drive back the invaders and to carry the war into their own territories. Instead of lavishing honors upon the Cæsar for his victories, Constantius made him the object of affronts which the most unsuccessful warrior or the most unambitious prince could not but have resented. The wrongs of Julian dated from an earlier period. At the age of six or seven years, he had escaped the massacre of his relatives only to be immured in a gilded prison during the greater part of his youth.[19] The respite obtained by the proclamation of his elder brother as Cæsar was quickly terminated by the execution of that prince. Julian then remained face to face with Constantius whom he naturally regarded as the destroyer of his brother and of his kinsmen, as well as his own oppressor. Unblinded by the appointment which he received as Cæsar, he was perfectly sensible of the danger betokened by the insulting proceedings of the Emperor. Proclaimed by his troops at Paris,[20] Julian set out, a few months afterwards, on his march to Constantinople. Constantius, hastening back from the expedition on which he had started towards the East, fell ill and died.[21] Julian succeeded to the supreme power without any further act or proclamation than that he had renounced the Christian religion.[22]

[18] 356 - 361. Amm. Marc., XVI. 2 *et seq.*, XVII. 1 *et seq.*, XVIII. 1 - 3. Zos, III. 3 *et seq.*

[19] "Why speak," he writes to the Athenians, "of those six years during which we were treated as rigorously as if we had been in Persia?"

[20] Which he describes as "the dear Lutetia, the little town of the Parisians." Misop., Op., p. 43, ed. Paris. 1583. Γερμανίας πολίχνη, says Zosimus, III. 9.

[21] 361. Amm. Marc., XXI. 15.

[22] Soc., III. 1. Julian, Ep. ad Atheniens.

To this act he was led by many motives. One, undoubtedly, was his detestation of Constantius, every association with whom had become intolerable.[23] Another motive, undoubtedly, was the repugnance with which he regarded the Christians contending with one another in defiance of all order as well as of all religion.[24] "I was a Christian," says Julian, "until my twentieth year."[25] From the seclusion of his boyhood, he had looked out upon the passions in which the Christian faith was shrouded as with deadly vapors. The first moments of freedom obtained by the prince were devoted to companions and to pursuits the farthest removed from the devotions and the priestly attendants of his confinement. He had yearned to escape from the religion as from everything else connected with his early trials.

But in abjuring the faith of the Christians, Julian cannot be said to have embraced the faith of the Heathen. The Deity whom he worshipped, and whom he called his subjects to worship, resembled no one in the ancient mythology. The resemblance was stronger to Him before whom the Christians knelt as the Universal and the Eternal God. The revelation, as it may be called, of the imperial seer differed more from that of the Christians on other

[23] "L'aversion qu'il (Julien) devait avoir contre Constance .... lui fit hair la religion que celui-ci professait." St. Martin, ap. Le Beau, Hist. du Bas-Empire, tom. III. p. 143. See the allegory composed by Julian himself amongst his works, translated by Duncombe, vol. I. pp. 105 *et seq.*

[24] And never was it truer that "the Christian religion .... was in all respects the very reverse .... of what many Christians have in every age labored to represent and to make it." Whately, Kingdom of Christ, p. 97, 2d edit.

[25] Ep. 51. And, at one time, a reader in the Church at Nicomedia. See Soc., III. 1, Soz., v. 2.

points. Acknowledging no Christ, no Saviour, he preferred to assert the existence and the activity of immortals like those adored by the Heathen. In this view, and in this alone, was the creed of Julian a restoration of the Heathen faith.

To maintain it, he did not think it necessary to assail the Christians. "By the gods," he writes, "I wish the Galileans neither to be slain, nor to be scourged unjustly, nor to suffer any sort of injury. I say, however, that they should rank below the worshippers of the immortals. Their madness had well nigh ruined us, and it is only by the mercy of our gods that we have been preserved. Wherefore, we have reason to honor our gods and those by whom they are worshipped."[26] All that the Emperor thought himself bound to do for the moment, was to reduce the Christians to the position held by them in earlier days. He would depose them, as it were, from the supremacy which they had usurped. But this, as he opined, was doing them no wrong. Nor would he do them wrong in any way. On the contrary, while he condemned their errors, he acknowledged their virtues. He urged the Heathen themselves to imitate the excellences which the Christians had professed, perhaps practised, in fidelity to their religion.[27] The opportunity for excellence and for virtue, he would argue, was much greater under the religion which he proclaimed.

So far was there a Heathen reaction against the Christians. They are lowered. Their opponents are

[26] Ep. 7. [27] Ap. Soz., v. 16.

elevated. But the hand which altered the scale continued to control it by a system that was only partially Heathen. The Christians had abandoned the ancient faith. They were therefore to be kept down. The Heathen were to be raised. But it was not merely because they had clung to the religion of their fathers. They had rather perverted it, according to Julian's creed. But he wished for fellow-believers. He desired to see his altars thronged with votaries. These he could find amongst no others besides the Heathen. They, therefore, were to be exalted above the rest of his subjects. It was still to secure a higher end. "The true policy of the times," declared the Emperor, "is faithfulness to ancient institutions. Consequently, when nothing relating to our public interests shall intervene, let things remain as they are or as they have been." [28] So far as this went, and it would go to extremes, Julian was leading a Heathen reaction.

Accordingly, the Heathen every where received proofs of the imperial favor. Such of the Christian parties as had been oppressed by Constantius obtained a show of consideration from his successor. [29] But neither the subject nor the dominant Christians were allowed to imagine the possibility either of retaining or of recovering the privileges granted by sovereigns of their own views. They who were enjoying immunities from the public service or bounties from the public treasury, found themselves sud-

[28] Cod. Theod., lib. v. tit. XII. 1. This is the "rückschreitende Reformation" which Arendt attributes to Julian. Leo der Grosse, p. 11.

[29] Soc., III. 11.

denly deprived of their distinctions.[30] They, on the other hand, whom Julian recalled to their homes, were warned against attempting to resume their former dignities.[31] The policy of the Emperor proved successful, so far as to persuade the Heathen that they had regained their ancient superiority. Doubtless it created apprehensions amongst the Christians lest they were relapsing into their ancient inferiority. But of their number, there were many whom no apprehensions could move, whom no certain afflictions could have dismayed.

None knew this better than Julian. All his determination, all his excitement against the Christians from whom he had parted, could not transform him into a persecutor. If he forbade the Christians to teach, it was not Christian, but Heathen literature that he prohibited their teaching.[32] If he denied them access to civil office, or if he ordered those in military office to sacrifice, he seldom enforced his orders or his denials by acts of violence.[33] Undoubtedly there were repeated outbreaks against the Christians.[34] But they were the result of local strifes or of popular passions. The most that Julian did to countenance them, was his half humorous, half reproachful reply to the remonstrances which he received in relation to the cruelties of sundry officials. "Ye ought," he said to the Christians by whom

[30] Soz., v. 4, 5.

[31] As in the case of Athanasius, who, on returning without permission to his family, was exiled, first from Alexandria, and then from Egypt. Jul., Ep. 5, 26, 51.

[32] Ep. 42. Soc., III. 12, 16.

[33] Soc., III. 13.

[34] Soc., III. 13 *et seq.* Soz., v. 5, 9 *et seq.*, 17. Theod., III. 7. See Ruinart, Acta Mart., tom. III. pp. 330 *et seq.*

the remonstrances were made, "Ye ought to bear with your persecutors, for such is the commandment of your God."[35] Why he did not attempt to promote the reaction of which he was the leader by persecution, appears to be very plain. It was partly because he did not wish, partly because he did not dare to apply force. It was chiefly because he knew that force would recoil from the spirit which it would inevitably meet amongst the Christians.[36]

Of all the Heathen from whom Julian sought sympathy or applause, no one was more valued by him or by his subjects at large than the rhetorician Libanius. Born at Antioch, Libanius had returned to his native city from various adventures,[37] as a teacher, in other places, where he attracted the admiration of his sovereign as "the most philosophical of rhetoricians and the most enthusiastic amongst the advocates of truth."[38] Influenced, in some degree, by quietness, but, in much greater degree, by nobleness of disposition, Libanius spent a long life in upholding the liberality which most of his contemporaries were continually violating. "If our friend," he wrote concerning a Christian, "thinks differently from us in relation to the Deity, he is his own enemy. But that his friends should regard him as their enemy is altogether unreasonable."[39] Libanius hailed the

[35] Soc., III. 14.

[36] See his own letter to the Alexandrians, ap. Soc., III. 3. His work against Christianity is described by Lardner, Testimonies Anc. Heathen, ch. 46. Compare Neander's "Picture" of "the Emperor Julian."

[37] He tells them in his Oration περὶ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ τύχης. Tom. I. ad init., ed. Reisk.

[38] Julian, Ep. 68.

[39] Ep. 730.

declaration of the Emperor in favor of his decaying philosophy and his decayed religion. "Those who really are, he hath distinguished," cried the exulting rhetorician, "from those who seem to be. . . . . To me it is the dawn of liberty to the world."[40] "To many," wrote Libanius at a later time, "came fears of losing their limbs or their lives. . . . . For it seemed but natural that the Emperor should do what had been done before him. The most dreadful sufferings, indeed, were anticipated. . . . . He, however, knowing that the numbers of the Christians would be increased by slaughter, avoided a violent course, leading those who were susceptible of improvement to the truth, but using no compulsion towards those whom he saw attached to their errors."[41] Such language would never have been employed by such as Libanius to eulogize a persecuting sovereign.

The Christian writers make grievous complaints of the injuries inflicted upon them by Julian. The reaction that had depressed them while it elevated the Heathen above them, would of itself appear to the Christians to be an intolerable affliction. But they themselves give proofs that they were not suffering from persecution. One of the most fervent writes to his brother, reproving him for having accepted the imperial bounties. He speaks of its being incredible that one should so far forget himself, at such a season, as to be desirous of authority or of worldly fortune. "As to our father," writes the sor-

[40] Ἐκείνην ἐγὼ τὴν ἡμέραν ἀρχὴν ἐλευθερίας τῇ γῇ καλῶ. Εἰς Ἰουλιανόν. Orat., tom. I. p. 376.

[41] Ἐπιτάφιος ἐπ' Ἰουλ. Orat., tom. I. pp. 562, 563.

rowing brother, "I have been consoling him by standing as surety for your faith, and by assuring him that you would give us no further uneasiness. But were our lady mother to learn aught about your doings, thus far concealed from her, she would feel such grief, believe me, as could by no possibility be assuaged. . . . . This much I forewarn you, that if you persist in your present course, one of two evils will be inevitable. Either you will lead a life unworthy of yourself and of your Christian hopes, or else, seeking after courtly honors, you will lose possessions of greater value in the midst of the smoke, if not of the fire, into which you must fall." [42] The letter implies the precedence of the Heathen in Julian's regards. It may even betoken the necessity of the Christian office-holder's violating his faith in the imperial service. But there is nothing in the letter to represent Julian as engaged in a persecution against his Christian subjects. Far from it; he was admitting some of them to the highest honors.

Of the leading Christians under the reign of Constantius, many were retiring from the foreground of the times. Athanasius, though he lived twelve years longer, [43] had done his part as the champion by turns of oppression and of resistance. Neither he nor any of his coadjutors entered into the interests of the succeeding period. Lucifer of Cagliari, after organizing a new faction on the narrowest basis which he could employ, died a schismatic in the eyes of his

[42] Greg. Naz., Ep. 7, ed. Caillau.

[43] Until 373. Soc., III. 14; IV. 13. Soz., VI. 12.

former associates.[44] Hilary of Poitiers sank deeper and deeper in the contentions rising upon the Arian and the Heathen reactions. Eusebius of Vercelli appears to have been the only one to plead for peace amidst the dissensions in which his generation passed away. New leaders, however, were already appearing in the places of the old. Nor did the Arians or any of the Christian parties go without their champions.

The city of Antioch, the capital, as it may be styled, of the Arian provinces, received a visit from Julian, in the year after his succession. He came preoccupied with great schemes, relating, on the one hand, to his religious, and, on the other, to his military policy. Visions of conquest were mingled with labors of preparation for the campaign on which the Emperor was resolved to set out against the Persian monarchy. Outlines of duties to be imposed upon his priests were blended with those of honors to be offered to his gods. Nor was there any sacrifice of time, or thought, or personal exertion that Julian grudged to promote the faith by which he believed himself to be inspired. Amongst his various designs was one of restoring the worship of his favorite deity, Apollo, at Daphne in the neighborhood of Antioch. To regain the spot formerly sacred to the god, but recently selected as the site of a Christian sanctury, in which Babylas, once Bishop of Antioch, was entombed, Julian ordered the relics to be removed. No opposition was attempted on the part

[44] About 370. His sect, called the Luciferiani, maintained the total impossibility of an Arian's obtaining forgiveness. Hier., Adv. Lucif., ad init. Soc., III. 9. Soz., v. 13.

of the Christians. But when the day of the removal arrived, the remains of their saint were met by the Christian population of Antioch chanting along the crowded highway. "Confounded," they sang, "be all they that serve graven images!" Julian witnessed the procession with wrath as well as amazement. Nor had his excitement cooled, when a conflagration, of which the cause was unknown, destroyed the temple at Daphne. There seems no good reason to doubt that he was so far carried away by his resentment against the Christians, as to permit, if not to direct their being cruelly abused.[45] Nothing, on the other hand, could have been needed after the events at Antioch to confirm his forebodings respecting the impracticability of any further reaction against Christianity.[46]

However this may have been, his reign was as brief as his purposes were vain. A year and a half from the death of Constantius formed the whole time that Julian had for renewing the ancient observances and defending the ancient territories of his Empire. At the end of that short period, when but thirty-one years old, he fell in battle with the Persians.[47]

Few of his subjects had comprehended him. The only point in his character to be appreciated was his military capacity,[48] of which he gave remarkable proofs for a young man, still more remarkable for

[45] All this in 362. Amm. Marc., XXII. 13. Soc., III. 18, 19. Soz., V. 19, 20. Theod., III. 10, 11.

[46] His measures in favor of the Jews led to the same end. Ep. 25. Soc., III. 20. Soz., V. 22. Amm. Marc., XXIII. 1.

[47] 363. His campaigns are related in Zos., III. 12 *et seq.*; Amm. Marc., XXIII. 2 *et seq.*, XXIV. 1 *et seq.*, XXV. 1–3.

[48] "Vir profecto heroicis connumerandus." Amm. Marc., XXV. 4.

one educated amongst ecclesiastics and philosophers. In all else, he was misunderstood by both the great classes, the Heathen as well as the Christians, whom he ruled. To the one class he was a censor and a fanatic. To the other he was an apostate and a persecutor.

Yet they had cause to remember him. The Heathen might look back upon the reign of Julian as upon the period when their religion was seen to be mortal. All that he had done to reform it, all that he had done to elevate it, was fruitless. His favors and his devotions were the last which it could receive from a sovereign of the Empire. Julian had proved the religion of the Heathen to be beyond his aid.

He had also proved the religion of the Christians to be beyond his control. What he had done affected only the persons of his Christian subjects. It could not touch their principles. The superiority of their faith to that of their sovereign was virtually acknowledged by himself. To make out his own creed he had borrowed from theirs. He had taken them as the examples of his fellow-votaries.

The Christians might remember one thing more in connection with the reign of Julian. His course weaned them from the dependence in which the subjects of Constantine and his sons had been fain to live. How uncertain was the support which a Christian Emperor could give to his Christian subjects had been demonstrated. But not until a Heathen Emperor reappeared, did the Christians throw themselves back upon their faith, upon their Saviour, upon

their God. Happy for them and for their successors would it have been, had the lesson been more enduring.

One of the Christians most prominent in resistance to Julian wrote with resentment of the homages exacted by a mere mortal like the Emperor. "Neither crowns," he exclaimed, "nor diadems, nor glittering purple, nor numerous statutes and tributes, nor a multitude of subjects suffice to constitute this royalty. He must have bendings of the knee that he may appear more august. Nay, it is not enough that he himself is adored. His statues, likewise, and his portraits must receive an adoration that shall make his own worship more complete and perfect. In these representations, the Emperor often has himself depicted as receiving the offerings of his greatest cities, the obeisances of those in authority, or the submissions of conquered foes. For he loves not only the reality, but the image, of the things in which he takes pride."[49] Thus to write was to appeal against the prostration of the Christians before their sovereign.

[49] Greg. Naz., Adv. Julian., Orat. III., p. 83, tom. I. ed. Morell.

CHAPTER XIX.

COUNTERPOISES.

"Il est assez en peine pour contenir l'esprit de liberté qui anime le peuple."
LAFAYETTE, *Mémoires*, tom. II. p. 220.

To throw off the imperial dominion was out of the question. Its subjects had no strength to do so. Nor had they any power of substituting a new dominion in place of the old one. Much less could they govern themselves. It was as undesirable, therefore, as it was impossible to overthrow the imperial dominion.

But to temper it, so to speak, was both possible and desirable. A spirit might be kindled amongst the subjects by which the power of the sovereign would be in some degree qualified. It might also be modified by the elevation of a power, like that, for instance, of the Christian priesthood. As soon as any other rulers besides the monarch could claim obedience, his authority was inevitably affected, probably moderated.

Nor was anything so much needed at the present moment. What had encouraged the Arian reaction but subjection to the imperial favor? What

but the same subjection had caused the Heathen reaction? The great need of the Christians, above all, of the Catholic Christians, was that of counterpoises to the imperial supremacy. They might come from the growing power of the Christian rulers. Or they might spring from the expanding spirit amongst the Christian masses. In either case, they would form so many barriers against such disorders as had rent the Catholic Church during the last half century.

A new generation appears. Its Emperors are of a different house from that of Constantine. Its Christian leaders are of a different stamp from that of Hilary and Valens, of Arius and Athanasius. New movements begin.

It was to a few Christian mothers that these movements owed their greatest leaders. Thirty-two years before the accession of Julian, a boy was born at Cæsarea in Cappadocia, of a noble lady named Emmelia. Under her eye and that of her husband's mother, Macrina,[1] Basil grew up until he reached the age at which a youth was wont to seek the instructions of men. Gregory, known by his later surname of the Nazianzen, was of the same age with Basil, like whom he had been reared by a mother's care. Her name was Nonna; and her son, dedicated before his birth to the Divine Service, was educated from his childhood as an offering to God.[2] The brother to whom Gregory wrote the

[1] "That blessed woman," says Basil in one of his letters, "the illustrious Macrina." Ep. 204, ed. Paris. alt.

[2] See his Orat. XIX. tom. I. pp. 290 *et seq.*; Carm., 4, 5, tom. II. pp. 71 *et seq.*, ed. Morell., or De Rebus Suis, 425 *et seq.*, ed. Caillau.

letter lately cited was Cæsarius, a physician at first of Constantius, and afterwards of Julian. The thought of the mother, whose grief Gregory made the chief argument of his appeal, was sufficient to detach Cæsarius from the court. Basil likewise had a brother Gregory, subsequently called the Nyssen. To the women who nurtured them, these children owed their noblest principles when they became leaders of the leading party in the Empire.

Another mother, the widow of a Gothic Præfect, was watching over her son Ambrose at Rome. Rather than part with him, when the time arrived for seeking other teachers than herself, she accompanied him in his search. From his earlier studies, Ambrose passed to legal pursuits, whence he rose to high distinctions in the Italian provinces. No other Christian influences appear to have been exerted upon his youth and early manhood but those of his mother and his sister.[3] Their piety[4] seems to have prepared him for the foremost place amongst the prelates of his age.

Eusebius Hieronymus, whom we call Jerome, was of about the same age as Ambrose, both being some ten years younger than Basil and the Gregories. Jerome was born on the borders of Pannonia. "From the very cradle," he says, "I was nourished with Catholic milk."[5] He speaks of his mother, but more particularly of his grandmother, as the teacher of his infancy. "From her arms," he says,

[3] Paulin., Vit. Ambros., 4, 5.

[4] See his own account of his sister, De Virg., III. 4.

[5] Ep. 39. tom. IV. pars II. p. 335.

"they had to take me by force when they sent me away to a master." [6]

Younger than all these was Joannes, to whom the epithet of Chrysostomus, that is, the Golden-mouthed, was applied in after years. To his mother, Anthusa, the widow of an imperial general, Chrysostom owed the tenderest care, and to her he returned the sincerest affection. But as he grew up at Antioch, the passion for seclusion, to which many of his contemporaries yielded, seized upon him, the more strongly because his nearest friend had determined upon withdrawing from the world. Thus moved, Chrysostom resolved to resign the affections of home for the penances of a hermitage where his best aspirations, as he thought, could have their only opportunity of being realized. Most Heathen mothers, prepared to see their children leading troubled, if not polluted lives, would have rejoiced to see their sons depart beyond the reach of oppressions and corruptions. But it was not so with Anthusa. The Christian parent believed her son capable of higher virtues as well as held to truer services than those of seclusion. Taking Chrysostom, as he relates, by the hand, she led him into her chamber, where she broke into tears and into words, more moving, as he confesses, than any tears. "I was not long allowed," she said, "to enjoy your father's excellence; it did not so please God. His death happening soon after your birth, too soon made you an orphan and me a widow." She spoke

[6] Apol. adv. Rufin., lib. I. p. 385, tom. IV. pars II.

of her trials; of the pains that she had taken to preserve the property and to provide for the education of her boy, on whose account she had refused all suitors to her hand.[7] "And yet," she continued, "I do not wish you to think that I am repeating these things with any intention of reproaching you. I but ask in return for what I have endured, that you would not now leave me in a second widowhood, or renew a sorrow that has at last become assuaged. Wait, at least, until I am dead; and that will not be long."[8] The supplication prevailed; and Chrysostom remained with his mother to discharge the duty which her entreaties had exalted above the obligation of his proposed solitude.[9] We shall read hereafter of the dignity and the usefulness to which Chrysostom attained in consequence of his filial obedience.

Augustine, born some years after Chrysostom in Numidia, has left a description of the anxious love with which his mother Monica was at this time guiding his infancy. "As a boy," he writes, "I had already heard of an eternal life. . . . . Even from the womb of my mother, whose hopes were placed in God, I was sealed with the cross. . . . . I believed, as my mother did, and as our whole household did, excepting my father. He, however, could not subdue the influence which my mother's devotion exerted

[7] *Βαβαί*, exclaimed Libanius, on hearing that Anthusa had been faithful to her husband's memory for twenty years, *Οἷαι παρὰ Χριστιανοῖς γυναῖκές εἰσι*, — "What women there are amongst the Christians!" Chrysost., Ad. Vid. Jun., 2.

[8] De Sacerd., I. 1, 2.

[9] He soon confesses the superiority of the active Christian. Ib., VI. 6, 7.

over me, nor could he prevail on me to delay believing, until he himself believed. It was my mother's labor that Thou, my God, shouldest be my father rather than my mortal parent."[10] To resist a husband, in order that a son might be preserved, was not then frequent in human experiences.

To such mothers as Monica must be ascribed, in a great measure, what we have called the counterpoises against the imperial oppression. That the scale should turn in favor of liberty, required a fresh spirit springing from fresh sources. Who could open these? Was it the Christian leader, leaning upon the power of the sovereign? Was it his follower accustomed to a dependence of his own as well as to that of the leader? It was apart from men, apart from their councils, as from their tribunals, that the love of Christian freedom needed to be renewed. The mother, watching over the slumbers and over the pursuits of her son, was the prophet of better times to come.[11] Such times might not arrive, not, at least, during the life of those who were thus prepared. But the work of the Christian mother was not the less true, not, in the real sense, less effectual.

Julian died, as will be remembered, in the midst of the troops with whom he had hoped to conquer Persia. The first to be declared his successor was

[10] Confess., I. 11.

[11] "What the blue sky is to the mother, the mother's upraised eyes and brow are to the child, the type and symbol of an invisible Heaven." Coleridge, Aids to Refl., vol. I. p. 179. "Notre religion, c'est celle de notre mère." Aimé Martin, Éduc. des Mères, p. 357.

a Heathen, the Præfect Sallustius,[12] whose unwillingness to assume the imperial authority left the throne open to a Christian, the Commander Jovian.[13] Yet the Christian was not proclaimed without consulting the auspices according to the Heathen ritual.[14] Jovian reigned only long enough to make a humiliating treaty with the Persian monarch, to whom the Roman was obliged to cede a large portion of the imperial realms.[15] In about six months, the death of Jovian was followed by the second proclamation of the Præfect Sallustius. He again declined the throne, and not only for himself, but also for his son, whom his eager partisans would have made their sovereign.[16] The power, once more upon the point of falling into Heathen hands, was finally conferred upon the Christian Valentinian, an officer of considerable merit but of very inconsiderable distinction.[17] A month later, the Emperor divided his authority with his brother Valens, to whom he assigned the administration of the Eastern provinces.[18] Gratian, the elder son of Valentinian, was declared Emperor during his father's life.[19] The younger son, named Valentinian, succeeded on his father's death.[20]

[12] Prætorian Præfect of the East. Amm. Marc., XXV. 5.

[13] 363. Amm. Marc., XXV. 6. Theod., IV. 1.

[14] Amm. Marc., XXV. 6.

[15] "Conditionibus . . . . dispendiosis Romanæ reipublicæ impositis, ut Nisibis et pars Mesopotamiæ tradereturr." Sext. Ruf., Brev., 29. The Christian countries of Armenia and Iberia were also abandoned to the Persians. Amm. Marc., XXV. 7, 9. Eutr, X. 9. Zos., III. 31, 32.

[16] Zos., III. 36.

[17] 364. Amm. Marc., XXVI. 2. Zos., III. 36. "Hujus pater Gratianus mediocri stirpe ortus apud Cibalas [in Pannonia.]" Aur. Vict., Epit., XLV. 2. So Amm. Marc., XXX. 7.

[18] Zos., IV. 3.

[19] 367. Zos., IV. 12. Amm. Marc., XXVI. 4.

[20] 375. Amm. Marc., XXX. 6, 10.

Such was the house beneath whose sway the Christian leaders began to assert themselves. Their movements, without being organized, were such as to present an almost uniform aspect.

The beginning was made in recoiling from the movements of the foregoing generation. Love of distinction was changed into love of obscurity. Scenes of penances or solitary devotions were sought with the earnestness that had before been spent in search of ceremonies and courtly honors. "Solitude," writes Basil to Gregory, "lends us the greatest aid. . . . . The mind returns to itself, and thence ascends to conceptions of the Deity. . . . . Free from earthly cares, it bestows all its zeal upon the acquisition of eternal blessings."[21] "All this," writes Gregory to Basil, "it is easy to desire, but not so easy to obtain. Do thou aid me, and inspire me with virtue, and secure the profit which we have made, that we may not vanish like shadows at the close of day."[22]

Both Gregory and Basil were familiar with the solitude which they praised. The rhetorical studies, pursued by them together at Athens, were almost immediately laid aside in the devotions to which they together devoted their lives. On one bank of a river in Pontus, was the monastery in which the two friends with various followers maintained their ascetic observances. On the other bank, lived Basil's mother Emmelia, with her daughter, the Superior of the convent where women gathered to imitate the devotions of their brethren. Basil, ap-

[21] Ep. 2. So Ep. 22, 42. [22] Ep. 6.

pointed Reader, then Deacon in the Church at his native Cæsarea, went thither only to return to his retirement with such eagerness as to reject the offers which he is said to have received from the Emperor Julian.[23] Meantime his friend Gregory, "caught," to use his own expression,[24] had been ordained a Priest by his father the Bishop of Nazianzus. Upon his previous retirement, he looked back with the same regrets that had already withdrawn Basil from his duties amongst men. It seemed to be felt that seclusion was the only means of escaping the dominion under which men lay prostrate. "They who retire from the world," says Gregory at a later time, "are the only ones owing naught to Cæsar, because they owe all to God.[25]

This was no life of ease. The sincere recluse of the present period considered his labors increased rather than abated in retirement.[26] At all events, they were of a higher character than those pursued amongst common men, and to succeed in them, higher powers were necessary. It was seldom conceived that withdrawal from worldly haunts authorized any neglect of the faculties or the tastes most honorable to humanity. "One thing," declares Gregory, "was dear to me. That was the glory of the learning belonging to both East and West. . . . . For I sought to make it serviceable to the true learning."[27]

[23] The genuineness of the letters ap. Basil., Ep. 39 *et seq.*, is not thoroughly determined.

[24] Ep. 8.

[25] *Οὐδὲν ἐχόντων Καίσαρι, πάντα Θεῷ.* Orat. IX. p. 159, XII. p. 191, tom. I.

[26] See Basil's works entitled Ascetica, especially his Regulæ and Constitutiones.

[27] Carm., De Suis Rebus, 96, 97, De Vita Sua, 113, 114; and

"We must assuredly understand," says Basil in one of his discourses, "that the greatest of all toils is before us. For this we are to do all things, for this we are to prepare ourselves with all our powers. Nor must we fail to cultivate familiarity with poets, historians and orators, as well as with all sorts of men from whom assistance can be derived in the improvement of our spiritual nature."[28] "Who is there," asks Gregory in his earliest sermon, "who that can create, as he would an earthen image in a single day, a defender of the truth, one, that is, who shall stand with the angels and sing praises with the archangels? . . . . . The multitude," he pleads, "so variously compounded of different ages and different dispositions, hath as much need as any stringed instrument of different touches to wake its different susceptibilities."[29]

With such views, the recluses of Pontus were but maturing themselves for the most active exertions. On Basil's elevation to the priesthood, Gregory, then a Presbyter at Nazianzus, wrote to his friend in terms that explain the position which they were prepared to occupy. "So both of us," says the Nazianzen, "have been forced up to the rank of Presbyters. Yet this was not our desire. To each other, at least, we can bear witness of our love for a humble life.

that singular poem the "Christus Patiens," which Villemain (Journal des Savants, 1845, p. 395) inclines to make the work of Gregory, Adp. to Greg. Naz., tom. II. ed. Caillau. See the Revue des Deux Mondes, tom. XVIII. pp. 834 *et seq.*, Nouv. Série.

[28] *Πρὸς τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἐπιμέλειαν.* Sermo De Leg. Lib. Gentil., tom. II. p. 245. Basil sends pupils to Libanius. Ep. 335, 337.

[29] Orat. I. tom. I. pp. 17, 31.

Perhaps it is better that our wishes should not have been gratified. Yet of this I cannot speak with surety, until I know more of the purposes of Providence. What hath been ordained we must endure, as it seems to me, and especially in a time that doth unseal many tongues of Heretical men against us. Nor ought we to do dishonor either to the hopes of those who have confided in us or to our former lives."[30] "Let us leave," writes Gregory to his brother Cæsarius, "let us leave something to be related to those who come after us, something that shall greatly redound to our glory and to the good of their souls. The same shall also prove to them that danger is better than security, and that trials are preferable to continued prosperity."[31] A few years went by, and Basil was elected Bishop of Cæsarea.[32] He appointed Gregory one of his suffragans; but Gregory, offended by the appointment,[33] declined it altogether, and became his father's assistant.[34] Soon afterwards the father died, leaving his son the virtual, though not the titular Bishop of Nazianzus.[35] Henceforward, until their deaths, both Gregory and Basil were amongst the most conspicuous of the Christian prelates.

From the time when they first entered the priesthood, they found themselves confronted by the Heathen whom Julian had everywhere encouraged to

[30] Ep. 8.

[31] Ep. 20.

[32] 370. Greg. Naz., Orat. XIX. pp. 311 *et seq.*, XX. pp. 342 *et seq.*, tom. I.

[33] Perhaps on account of its poverty, perhaps on account of its exposure to controversies. Orat. V. pp. 135, 136. De Vita Sua, 386 *et seq.*

[34] 372. Orat. VIII. pp. 145 *et seq.*

[35] 374. Orat. XIX. pp. 286 *et seq.*

resume the upper hand. The inferior position to which the death of that sovereign drove back his favored subjects was far more dangerous to the Christians than any persecution which the Heathen could have inflicted. The worst passions were every where starting into activity when Gregory of Nazianzen, by whom the decease of Julian had been exultingly hailed, wrote compassionately of those whom that event had bereft of their protector. "Let us not use our advantages," he urges upon his fellow-believers, "without moderation. Let us not run wild with our superiority; or become cruel to those by whom we have been injured. We ought not to do the very deeds of which we have been complaining. Rather should we enjoy the change in our circumstances by avoiding all acts of violence and by abhorring all acts of vengeance. . . . . We have to make it manifest that their divinities have taught them one thing, but that we have been taught quite another thing by Christ. He acquired glory by what He suffered; nor was His victory less because He refrained from doing what He might have done against His foes." [36] Words like these appear to open a new era. Nor was there any portion of the imperial history to which the praise of toleration can be more truly ascribed than to that comprising the reigns of Jovian and Valentinian. [37] It proves, however, the security, rather than the liberality of the Christians.

[36] Orat. IV. tom. I. pp. 130, 131.

[37] On Jovian's toleration, see Soc., III. 24, 25; on Valentinian's, Amm. Marc., XXX. 9. "Testes sunt leges a me," runs a law of the latter sovereign, "in exordio imperii mei datæ, quibus unicuique, quod animo imbibisset, colendi libera facultas tributa est." Cod. Theod., lib. IX. tit. XVI. 9.

Perchance their passions were exhausted by the disputes and the persecutions amongst themselves. With leaders like Gregory and Basil, the Catholic party rose again towards supremacy. "Great is the war," wrote Gregory of Basil, "around him."[38] "All that is most audacious and shameless," wrote Basil himself, "of the Arians' heresy, though openly severed from the body of the Church, doth cleave to its own errors. . . . . One of the number who thus molest us is Eustathius of Sebastia in Armenia. . . . . He leads the heresy of the Pneumatomachi, or Opponents of the Holy Spirit.[39] . . . . . Next after him is Apollinarius,[40] who doth trouble the Churches not a little. . . . . There are his writings concerning the Resurrection, composed after the mythic, or rather the Jewish style, in which he says that we must again return to the service of the law, and again become Jews. . . . . Then there are his writings concerning the Incarnation,[41] which have created so great a disturbance amongst the brotherhood, as to have left few capable of preserving the ancient faith."[42] Many other names make up the roll of those against whom the Catholic champions of the time were obliged to struggle. Yet all the glare of contention could not now blind the contending parties to the religious beauty of peace. "I would willingly lay down my

[38] Ep. 58.

[39] "I cannot persuade myself," he is said to have remarked, "to call the Holy Spirit God, neither would I dare to call it a creature." Soc., II. 45.

[40] Of Laodicea. See a tract by Greg. Nyssen., Adv. Apollin., tom. III. pp. 26 *et seq.*, ed. Morell.

[41] He maintained that the Logos alone, and not a human spirit, was incarnate in the human body of the Saviour. See Greg. Nyssen., Adv. Apollin., as above, pp. 264, 265.

[42] Ep. 263.

life," exclaimed Basil, "so that the flames of hatred lighted by the evil one might be extinguished. . . . . I seek the true peace that was bequeathed unto us by the Lord." [43]

Amidst these hurrying shadows, the Catholic prelates maintained their authority against all threatening powers. To do this in the West, where the Emperor Valentinian upheld the Catholic cause, was comparatively easy. But in the East, where the Emperor Valens espoused the Arian side, it required all the resolution of the Catholic leaders to defend themselves against actual oppression. [44]

Basil had been Bishop but a few months, when he received the orders of Valens to communicate with the Arians under penalty of expulsion from Cæsarea. To the Præfect bearing the imperial commands, Basil courageously refused obedience. "Dost thou not fear the Emperor?" asked the enraged minister. "Why should I?" rejoined the undaunted Bishop. "Confiscation and banishment, torture and death cannot reach me. How can one be in dread of confiscation, who hath nothing besides these worn garments and a few volumes? I can suffer no banishment, for I am bound to no place, nor do I think this country or any other to belong to me, but rather to God, whose stranger and sojourner I am. As for torture, how can I, without strength of body, suffer more than the first strokes? These are all that you can really inflict upon me. Death itself will be my benefactor by sending me sooner to God whom I live for and

[43] Ep. 128. Soz., VI. 7 *et seq.* Theod., IV. 13
[44] See Soc., IV. 2, 9, 16, 17. *et seq.*

serve. Indeed, being already dead in most respects, I have for a long time back been hastening unto Him."

The Præfect exclaimed that no one had ever before used such boldness of speech in his presence. "Probably," replied Basil, "because you have never before encountered a Bishop, for he would have spoken in the same manner, had he been contending for the same things. On other points," he added, "we are submissive, and more humble than any other class, inasmuch as our religion commands us to refrain from even knitting our brows, not only against such magistrates as you, but also against any one of your inferiors. But when the question relates to our Deity, we disregard all things else, looking to Him alone."[45]

The Præfect returned to meet his master, then on the way to Cæsarea. "We are routed," he said, "and by the head of yonder Church. He is a man superior to threats, stubborn to arguments, and inaccessible to persuasions. Some one of a weaker sort must be tried, not he." Valens, far from giving way to what he considered the impiety as well as the seditiousness of the Catholic prelate, sent others of his officers to overawe Basil. He was finally summoned into the presence of Valens. But neither the displeasure of the sovereign nor the imitative hostility of his attendants intimidated the steadfast Bishop. Nothing would prevail on him, as his words and his acts declared, to admit to his communion a party of blasphemers, as he considered the Arians.[46]

[45] Greg. Naz., Orat. xx. tom. i. pp. 349, 350.

[46] Gregory Nyssen gives an account of sundry attempts to over-

Constantine or any one of his sons would have ordered so contumacious a subject as Basil into exile. Valens did not venture upon proceeding openly with any measures against the imposing prelate. A stratagem suggested itself. The Emperor should appear, Arian as he was, at the altar of the church in which Basil officiated. Should the Bishop assent as his antagonists believed he would, to communicate with the Arian sovereign, he could no longer refuse to communicate with the Arian subjects. Accordingly, on the festival of the Epiphany, Valens proceeded with guards and courtiers to the principal church of Cæsarea. The Bishop was standing upright, "such," says his friend of Nazianzus, "as the Scripture depicteth Samuel," neither movement nor expression betraying that he had regarded the entrance of the sovereign. At the end of the sermon, Valens advanced towards the chancel. But such was the awe inspired by the Bishop in the attending clergy, that not one of them dared, unbidden, to receive the oblations of the Arian Emperor. He himself, says the admiring narrator, was so greatly agitated, that he would have fallen had he not been supported by one of the priests. As soon, apparently, as he recovered himself, Valens withdrew, wondering, doubtless, as much as his attendants, how he could yield so entirely to one of his own subjects.[47] Doubt-

come his brother's resolution. Cont. Eunom., lib. I. tom. II. pp. 312 *et seq.* See, also, Theod., IV. 19. Soz., VI. 16. Soc., IV. 26.

[47] Greg. Naz., Orat. XX. p. 351. All this was in 371.

less, also, he went meditating upon the means to be employed in subjugating the Bishop who had dared to prove that the imperial authority was irresistible no more.[48] Basil, on the other hand, remained triumphant. The tone assumed by him towards the Emperor could not be lowered. Nor could his people sink while he continued to raise them above their weaknesses. When he triumphed, they exulted. When he was assailed, they rose in rebellion.[49]

Less courageous leaders had less courageous followers. Basil's own brother, Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa in Cappadocia, could not maintain himself against the assaults of the Arians. Nor could his people sustain themselves.[50] To yield to the Arians in the East, was the same as yielding to the Emperor supporting them. In the West, there were other claims upon the submission of the Christians. West and East, the subject, whether Christian or Heathen, continued to be oppressed. The counterpoises of comparatively few years were not sufficient to check the imperial dominion of centuries.

Basil persevered in doing his part. As if to punish him for his unparalleled independence towards his sovereign, it appears that a large portion of his diocese was taken from him to be placed under the control of Anthimus, Bishop of Tyana. Basil was on a journey, probably through Cappadocia, when he received despatches from Cæsarea, informing him of

[48] Theod., IV. 19.

[49] As against the governor of Pontus. Greg. Naz., Orat. XX. pp. 353 *et seq.*

[50] Greg. Nyss., De Vit. Macr., tom. II. p. 192.

the measure which the hostility of his sovereign had dictated. He seems to have turned back at once, "not," he said, "as if I could really effect anything, but to escape the imputation of avoiding my duty." Before reaching Cæsarea, he wrote to a friend in authority, urging him "not to allow the land to lie prostrate upon its knees." "Rather," he added, "do you go to the court, and there speak with characteristic boldness. Tell them that they need not hope to have two provinces instead of one. . . . . Show them that their dominion is not to be increased in this fashion, that their power does not consist in the number, but in the condition of their realms. . . . . This declare to them openly, that if they do not change their plans, they will have no subjects left to whom they can display their consideration."[51] Not satisfied with the response to this appeal, Basil wrote to other Cappadocians of rank,[52] calling upon them likewise to give their aid "in the calamities that had befallen their country."[53] Meanwhile the Bishop retained his hold, so far as he could, upon the district that had been declared a separate diocese. He continued to direct its priesthood and to receive the offerings which its people had been wont to make to him as to their ecclesiastical head. Nor did he hesitate to expose his person in visits to the disputed territory.

Returning from one of these visits, Basil was waylaid by his competitor, the Bishop of Tyana. Anthi-

[51] Ep. 74. [52] Ep. 75, 76, 77, 78. [53] Ep. 76.

mus was an old man, but one whose passions had been aroused to the utmost not only by his determination to defend himself in his new dignity, but by his responsibility to the Emperor who had undoubtedly commanded him to oppose the Bishop of Cæsarea by every possible means. On the occasion mentioned, Basil found himself in the midst of a troop collected by Anthimus to prevent the passage of his antagonist through the country which both claimed as their own. The Bishop of Cæsarea appears to have escaped with the loss of the tribute which he was conveying homeward from the disputed settlements.[54] But he took advantage of the occurrence to remonstrate with the people of Tyana against the conduct of their Bishop. A letter, addressed to the council of Tyana, declares that Basil "neither sees nor hears aught beside the peace of God and whatever may tend to its attainment..... To this end," he continues, "I have determined to shun no labor, to neglect no humility of speech or action, to avoid no journey, however long, no trouble, however great, if I may but obtain the results of peacemaking."[55] Evidently, Basil calls the people of Tyana to side with him against their own Bishop. But the appeal seems to have gone without an answer as well as the appeals already made more directly against the imperial oppression. Anthimus kept his place with many acts of provocation against the intrepid Bishop of Cæsarea.

[54] Greg. Naz., Orat. xx. tom. i. p. 356. [55] Ep. 97.

Neither Basil, however, nor his imitators could be absorbed in these contentions with the sovereign authority. Day by day, a variety of interests filled up the largest portion of their lives. Basil, for instance, was chiefly occupied in exercising untiring care as well as unbending authority in relation to every class of his people, every gathering of his recluses,[56] every order of his clergy. The poor found relief in the hospitals which he opened, and for which he labored with unwearied benevolence.[57] Both as the ruler of his diocese and as one of the most eminent amongst his contemporary prelates, Basil was a marvel at once of yielding tenderness towards the weak and of imperious severity towards the proud. A singular proof of these mingled qualities appears in his action with regard to a slave, whom a humble community in Cappadocia had elected its Bishop. Not only was the slave ordained but defended against the recriminations of his mistress by his Metropolitan of Cæsarea. "Thou hast even threatened me," wrote Basil to the offended lady, "but I shall be judged, not as thou desirest, but as God shall determine."[58] When Basil had passed away, the mistress applied to Gregory of Nazianzus to declare the ordination of the slave invalid. The Nazianzen proved as resolute as the Cæsarean.[59] Every such encounter with the pre-

[56] In his rules for whom we find the first traces of the labors, physical and intellectual, in which the monks of later times engaged. Reg. fus. Tract.,Int. xv. xxxviii.

[57] See the glowing description in Gregory's eulogy, Orat. xx. tom. i. pp. 359, 360.

[58] Ep. 115.

[59] Greg. Naz., Ep. 79. Basil died in 379. He was literally, says Ephraim of Edessa, "the Base of Virtue." Encom. in Magn. Bas., tom. ii. p. 289. See a discourse by Gregory of Nyssen, tom. iii. p. 479.

judices of the higher classes was as heavy a counterpoise to the imperial power as could be obtained.

Counterpoises of a still different nature did not fail. No prelate of the time had passed through a wider expanse of strife than Meletius, born in Armenia Minor, and raised at the close of Constantius's reign to the great see of Antioch. From the moment of his elevation, Meletius found himself the victim of dissensions which he could not pacify. He was obliged not only to see his opponents electing their Bishops in his room, but to retire before them because Valens the Emperor was on their side. At the expiration of the period embraced in the present chapter, he returned from his second or third banishment, to deal, as he might, with no less than two competitors to the episcopacy of Antioch.[60] One of the two, being a zealous Arian, was beyond the influence of Meletius; but to the other, a Catholic like himself, he made a proposal to which there is no precedent in our history. "Inasmuch," he began, "as the Lord hath committed to me the care of these sheep, and as thou hast assumed the charge of those whose faith is the same as ours, let us unite our flocks, my friend, and lay aside our dispute about the supremacy. . . . . And if I," he concluded, "depart from life before thee, then thou wilt have the sole conduct of the flock. But if thou goest before me, then I shall take the flock under my care."[61] The proposal, which could have come from none but "a good heart,"[62] was accepted after considerable delay.[63] It could only suggest, however,

[60] Soc., v. 3.

[61] Theod., v. 3.

[62] Which Basil ascribes to Meletius. Ep. 57.

[63] Soc., v. 5. Soz., vii. 3.

without actually effecting the results to be wrought by the union of those with whom it lay to temper the imperial authority.

On the contrary, wherever contentions prevailed, the dependence of the Christians and their leaders continued unbroken. A sad scene took place at Rome, where the Presbyter Damasus and the Deacon Ursicimus contended for the episcopate.[64] To form any idea of the commotions thus excited, we must catch the hints of the ancient historian concerning the banquets of the Roman prelates, their robes and chariots, the tributes which they received and squandered.[65] Such were the disturbances throughout the city, that the very Præfect was obliged to withdraw. The followers of Damasus took up arms, and, breaking into the church where their opponents were assembled, they despatched a hundred and thirty-seven of the number. To crown the humiliation to which he stooped, Damasus sued for the interposition of the Emperor Valentinian. To his favor the ambitious prelate finally owed success.[66] While such events were passing, the Western dioceses, of which the Roman see was always the principal, could not have escaped their share of disturbance and of shame. The prelates of the East looked to the West as to a paradise from

[64] 366. "Supra humanum modum ad rapiendam episcopatus sedem ardentes." Amm. Marc., XXVII. 3.

[65] Amm. Marc., *ut sup.* Marcell. et Faustin., Adv. Damas., ap. Sirmond., Op. Var., tom. I. pp. 150, 159. "Make me the Bishop of the Roman city," said a Heathen to Damasus, "and I will straightway become a Christian." Hier., Ep. 38.

[66] Amm. Marc., XXVII. 9. Rom. Conc., Epist., cited from Sirmond by Gieseler, Man. Eccl. Hist., § 94, notes 11, 12.

which the Catholic sovereigns excluded heresies and persecutions.[67] But it was amongst the Eastern Christians, contending with the oppression of their Arian Emperor, that every instance of liberty occurred during the period under consideration.

Yet the East had more than its share of the controversies with which the period was crowded full. Of all the prelates in that, or in any other portion of the Empire, no one deserved a higher reputation for the mildness as well as the resolution of his nature than Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem. His writings,[68] devoted to the instruction of his converts, show how he preferred the good of his dependents to his own advancement amongst his superiors. Yet Cyril, from the very outset of his episcopacy, was embroiled in a contest for precedence with the Arian Bishop of Cæsarea.[69] Deposed, restored, and again deposed, the Bishop of Jerusalem was one of those whom Constantius sent into exile. Recalled by Julian, he was again banished by Valens, to be afterwards reinstated in his see amidst the utmost disorder on the part of his people. So great was the confusion at Jerusalem, that a council at Antioch deputed Gregory of Nyssa to journey thither with a view of restoring tranquillity. The envoy has left an account concerning the divisions and the innovations of the Christians whom Cyril had been spending his life in vainly

[67] See Basil's repeated letters ad Occidentales, especially Ep. 92, 242 *et seq.* In this connection may be taken a law of Valentinian, preventing appeals from the judgment of episcopal councils. Cod. Theod., lib. XI. tit. XXXVI. 20.

[68] Especially the Catacheses, seu Institutiones Illuminatorum Hierosolymis extemporaneæ.

[69] 357. Theod., II. 26. Soz., IV. 25. Soc., II. 40. Cyril had been ordained but six years before.

attempting to govern.[70] Gregory returned unsuccessful.[71]

The more violent the tendency to disunion amongst the Christians, the more earnest was the longing of many for union. The Church at Edessa, beyond the Euphrates, boasted of a Deacon, Ephraim of Syria, whose reputation for devout humility surpassed that of almost all his contemporaries.[72] Elected Bishop, he answered the summons to be ordained by running out into the market-place, tearing his hair and nibbling food with gestures so peculiar that he was supposed to be insane. The messengers of the council by which he had been elected returned with the intelligence that the holy man was altogether unfit for ordination.[73] Thenceforward Ephraim lived in peace. But not in inactivity.

Seclusion, in his view, gave the Christian an opportunity not so much of living without control as of controlling himself.[74] He who sought retirement was to be bound by regulations, obedience to which constituted the liberty that he might desire.[75] Of the three great duties incumbent upon him, the first was prayer and the second was labor. Not until these were discharged, was the recluse to think of his third duty, namely, meditation.[76] To these prin-

[70] Greg. Nyss., Jerus., tom. III. p. 653, Ad Eustat., ib., pp. 656 *et seq.* This was in 380.

[71] Cyril died in 386. Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 112. Soc., v. 15.

[72] *Ἐῴκει δὲ πάντας παρευδοκιμεῖν.* Soz., III. 16.

[73] Soz., III. 16.

[74] "Præclarissimum munus est potestas arbitrii." Ephr., Serm. XI. Adv. Hæreses, tom. V. p. 461, Lat. trans., ed. Vatic.

[75] *Νῆψον, ἀγαπητέ, νῆψον*—"Be wary, beloved, be wary!" Serm. Ascet., tom. I. p. 51. See the discourse In illud, Attende Tibi Ipsi, tom. I. pp. 230 *et seq.*

[76] *Τῶν τριῶν τούτων, σχολῆς εἰς προσευχήν, καὶ ἔργου, καὶ μελέτης.* De Humilitate, 21, tom. I. p. 306.

ciples Ephraim himself religiously adhered. Toils without number occupied his time. One hour, he was ministering to the bodily needs of the poor and the diseased. The next hour, he might be relieving the spiritual wants of the meanest penitent or of the proudest prelate who sought his counsel. A vast collection of writings still recalls the industrious devotion of Ephraim in serving those whom he might never see or of whom he might never hear. His testament, as it was styled, besought his disciples to continue their exertions, at the same time that it conjured "his fathers, brothers and children" of Edessa to distribute in alms whatever sum they might have thought of expending upon his funeral.[77] So to live, so to die, was to labor for union amidst all the disunion of the time.

Such, for the present, were the counterpoises against the imperial oppression. How they sprang from the spirit amongst the great body of Christians as well as from the power attained by the Christian leaders has been described. But the extent to which these counterpoises were carried must be gathered from events yet to occur. We can already discern the process by which the principles supporting the dominion of the Roman Emperor were gradually undermined.

There are evidences, however, to prove the dominion still exerted over the highest Christians as well as over the lowest of those who had no such leaders

[77] De Fine Vitæ Suæ, tom. II. p. 398. See Greg. Nyss., De Vit. Ephr., tom. III. p. 613.

as the Christians followed. Valens levels a law at the very class by whom he seemed to be most baffled. "There are some lovers of idleness," he proclaimed, "who desert their public duties for solitudes and hiding-places, under the show of religion. . . . . These I have ordered to be dragged from their concealment and sent back to their responsibilities at home."[78] The Catholic sovereign of the West launches a decree, on his side, against "ecclesiastics, or those bearing the name, who visit the houses of widows and orphans . . . . for the sake of gifts or legacies."[79] Serious restrictions were placed upon every order of the clergy, from whom, likewise, especially in the Eastern provinces,[80] many of their immunities were snatched away.

The most threatening obstacles to the independence of the Christians were those raised amongst themselves. Not merely were they so divided as to fail of achieving what they would have wrought with concerted energies. But their faculties were overshadowed, nay, frequently overpowered by the darksome tendencies of their devotions. No doctrine was too gloomy for some. No reverie was too mysterious for others. Here was a Christian who beheld miracles. There was one who wrought them. Visions filled the days as well as the nights of many. Struggles occupied the entire lives of many more. Men lived with phantoms and demons as much as with one another.

[78] Cod. Theod., lib. XII. tit. I. 63. (Ep. 34,) "sed doleo cur meruerimus hanc legem."

[79] Ib., lib. XVI. tit. II. 20. "Nec de lege conqueror," says Jerome,

[80] See Basil's significant complaints. Ep. 104.

Nothing, in short, was too awful, nothing too trifling to be believed in as the daily experience of humanity. The consequence was that the powers needed as counterpoises to oppression and to evil were scattered amongst wavering impulses and shuddering alarms. That these things were ordered for wise ends no reverent heart will doubt. But there must still be a regret that the Christians, who could do so much to raise themselves, were so hindered by their own infirmities.

CHAPTER XX.

ULPHILAS THE VISIGOTH.

"Tout ce qui était sacré à travers les scènes lugubres de ce fléau dévastateur."
DE MAISTRE, *Soirées de St. Pétersbourg*, Entretien VII.

WHILE the Roman Christians thus frequently proved themselves unequal to the contest with the imperial centralization, a new race of believers was preparing to enter into the strife. Of this preparation we obtain a glimpse in the career of Ulphilas the Visigoth.

The house of Valentinian was shaken not only by revolts,[1] but by invasions.[2] "Amidst the clang of trumpets throughout the world," says the imperial historian, "the wildest races broke beyond their boundaries."[3] It was no sudden storm. Long had it been impending before it closed the reigns of Valentinian and Valens.

The strength of the tempest lay in the North East,

[1] Amm. Marc., XXVI. 6–10, XXVIII. 6, XXIX. 5.
[2] Id., XXVIII. 1 (Gaul), XXVIII. 3 (Britain). Another peace was patched up with Persia. Zos., IV. 21. Eunap., Exc. de Leg., 6, ed. Niebuhr.
[3] Amm. Marc., XXVI. 4.

where many tumultuous tribes were contending amongst themselves. West of the Dniester now dwelt the Visigoths, the western branch of the race whose name had been applied to almost every host of northern warriors attracting the notice of the Romans. East of the Dniester, on the plains stretching to the river Don, was settled the eastern branch of the same race under the name of the Ostrogoths. Beyond the Don were the Alans, beyond them again the Huns, whose terrible assaults in the rear, as it were, of the other nations, are supposed to have precipitated those in the van upon the territories of the Empire.[4]

Soon after the death of Valentinian while engaged in warfare with some of the northern tribes, Valens received an embassy from a part of the Visigothic nation entreating permission to take refuge within the imperial frontier.[5] The Emperor could not refuse them. Neither could he prevent them from admitting their kindred or from carrying devastation through all the country to the south of the lands which they had first occupied.[6] Without waiting for succor from his nephew and colleague Gratian, Valens hastened to meet the Visigoths. A battle was fought near Hadrianople in Thrace, where the legions fell in carnage amidst which the very corpse of their Emperor disappeared. The defeat was so overwhelm-

[4] "Chunni (the Huns) in Alanos, Alani in Gothos insurrexerunt." Ambros., Expos. Evang. sec. Luc., x. 10, cited by Le Beau. See Amm. Marc., xxxi. 1–3. Jornandes, De Reb. Get., 23, 24.

[5] 375, 376. Amm. Marc., xxxi. 4. Eunap., Exc. de Leg., 6.

[6] 376, 377. Eunap., Exc. de Sentent., 40. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 26. Amm. Marc., xxxi. 5 *et seq.*

ing that it could be likened only to the overthrow which Hannibal had caused at Cannæ.[7]

Amongst the Visigothic leaders, there was one of a stamp unusual with northern warriors. Twenty years before, the court of Constantius had been visited by Ulphilas, the Bishop of the Gothic Christians.[8] He came to solicit protection for himself and his fellow-believers against their persecuting chieftains. He obtained a grant of land in Mœsia, where his followers settled under his direction, and where they seem to have been afterwards joined by their countrymen then retreating from the advancing hordes of the north-east.[9] The imperial rulers might have thought Ulphilas committed to their interests. One of their provinces was the home of his ancestors.[10] Another was the home in which he was now settled. But he was no prelate of the Empire. Receiving his flying countrymen, he went as the chief of their embassy to demand their admission into the imperial domains.[11] Of his part in the terrible war that ensued, no account remains. But it may be inferred that Ulphilas, though averse to the hostilities in which his countrymen were always ready to engage, could not but sympathize with their success. The differ-

[7] 378. "Nec ulla annalibus præter Cannensem pugnam ita ad internecionem res legitur gesta." Amm. Marc., xxxi. 13.

[8] See the Acta Sabæ, ap. Ruinart, tom. iii. pp. 383 *et seq.*

[9] Jorn., De Reb. Get., 25. Philostorg., ii. 5.

[10] Who, whether paternal or maternal, were captives from Cappadocia. Philostorg., ii. 5. Ulphilas was born about 318, and became Bishop about thirty years afterwards. Auxentius of Dorostorus, cited by Neander, Hist. Christ. Religion and Church, 2d edit., in the American translation, vol. ii. pp. 735 *et seq.*

[11] Soz., vi. 37. Niceph. Callist., xi. 48.

ence between him and the other Gothic leaders was not of associations or of sympathies. It was one of faith.

Inspired by this, Ulphilas undertook labors which no other Goth had ever attempted. Endeavoring to raise the character of his race, he began with changing the sources of its inspirations. The Emperor to whom he first presented himself in behalf of his flock, called him "the Moses of the age."[12] The comparison holds good in more respects than one. Not only did Ulphilas lead his converted countrymen beyond the reach of their persecutors, but he opened to them more clearly the religion for the sake of which they had fled. "They accepted his words," says one of the ancient historians, "as immutable laws."[13] The words with which he would have most deeply impressed them were not his own, but those of the Scriptures, which he actually translated into the Gothic language. Imagination must picture the Bishop devoting himself to toils which few of his wild people could appreciate, fewer still assist. But not the less thoroughly was his task fulfilled. "The Greek, the Latin and the Gothic language," according to one of his disciples, could henceforth be used together "in the Church of Christ."[14]

It is touching to read how the good Visigoth omitted the Books of Kings from his translation of the Scriptures. "Inasmuch," he seems to have said, "as

[12] Ὁ ἐφ' ἡμῶν Μωσῆς. Philost., II. 5. So Auxentius, as above, p. 737, note.

[13] Theod., IV. 37.

[14] Auxentius, as above, p. 737, note. St. Martin (ap. Le Beau, Hist. du Bas-Empire, tom. IV. p. 97) denies that Ulphilas invented a Gothic alphabet.

they contain the history of wars, they are not fit for my people, already full of warlike ideas, for which they need a curb rather than a spur."[15] In vain would the Bishop desire his race to lay aside their arms. His own immediate followers might subside into peaceful occupations. But the great Gothic flood was still to rise over the Roman realms. It was enough for Ulphilas to plead that the warfare of the future might be less ferocious than the warfare of the past.

Ulphilas, as formerly mentioned, was present at the council which declared the supremacy of the Arian Christians. To him the distinctions of the various creeds, then shooting forth in every direction and in every form, were probably unimportant. Without any intention of binding his countrymen to any single sect of Christians, Ulphilas embraced the Arian doctrines.[16] The example spread. Gradually, not only the Visigoths, but likewise the other races from whom issued the invaders of a later time, became Arians as they became Christians.[17] Many a link in the chain of coming ages was affected by the conversion of the Northern nations to Arian Christianity. Had they come unconverted, the very vestiges as well as the possessions of the Romans would have been swept away in one uproarious havoc. Had they come as Catholic converts, submissive to the sovereign or

[15] Philostorg., II. 5.

[16] Id., ib. See, also, Theod., IV. 37; Soz., VI. 37; Soc., IV. 33.

[17] "Ariani potius quam Christiani," says the later Goth, Jornandes. De Reb. Get., 25. "Voilà," exclaims the indignant Catholic, "comment un seul homme entraina dans l'enfer ce nombre infini de septentrionaux!" Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. VI. p. 608.

to the priesthood of the Catholic Church, the invasion might have been turned back for centuries. Or if, though Catholics, they had still pressed on against the realms of their fellow-believers, they would have had no ability to turn the course of things as ordered by the Catholics of the Empire. All this was averted by the decision of Ulphilas and his fellow-converts of the North.

The contrast between the adoption of the Arian creed by Ulphilas and its rejection by the Saracen Moses is very striking. On the eastern border of the imperial realms, was a tribe of Saracens, or Ismaelites, as they were differently styled.[18] Unsettled like their successors upon the same soil, these Saracens for some time ravaged most of the provinces on their side of the Empire.[19] At length, on condition that one of their countrymen should be ordained their Bishop by some of the imperial prelates, they consented to make peace with Valens. They chose the hermit Moses; and him the Emperor directed to Lucius, the Arian Bishop of Alexandria. But the Saracen, refusing to be ordained by any Arian hands, sought for some Catholic prelates who had been driven from their sees, and by them he was ordained.[20] No such destiny was in store for the Eastern as that which awaited the Northern tribes. Else, perhaps, the warriors of the East would have been made Arians.

But were the invaders of the Empire to continue Arians? Was the union of the Catholic Church to

[18] Soz., VI. 38. Theod., IV. 23.
[19] Soc., IV. 36.
[20] Id., ib. Soz., VI. 38. Theod., IV. 23.

yield to the broken organization of the Arian Christians when the imperial centralization fell? Not so. If centralization was to be overthrown, it would not be until some degree of union amongst the Christians was secured. This the Arians were not to establish for others. They had not been able to establish it for themselves. It could not be ordained that the Northern Christians were to continue Arians.

A scene at Constantinople ushers in the coming conversions. Not many years after Ulphilas joined the Arians, a church was opened for the use of such amongst his countrymen as had become Catholics. The ceremonies of dedication, conducted by Gothic priests in the Gothic language, appear to have attracted an immense auditory. At the close of the service, the Archbishop, Chrysostom, at whose commands it had been performed, rose to address his people. "Let us think it no shame," he remarks, as if to anticipate their prejudices, "no shame that barbarians should be of our Church, but rather a great glory. . . . . For to-day, ye behold men of all others especially barbarian, flocking in amongst our sheep, with one law, one fold, one table for all." What the Archbishop thought applicable to the strangers as well as to his more familiar hearers, he probably ordered to be interpreted as he proceeded.[21] Here, then, were Northern Christians and Roman, Roman Christians and Northern, united as Catholics. "Would that the disbelievers were present," cried the Archbishop, "to

[21] Theodoret (v. 30) speaks of Chrysostom's custom to use interpreters.

learn what is the might of the Crucified, what the power of the Cross!" [22]

To such an end Ulphilas, though an Arian, had contributed. Of the close of his life we know nothing but that he died advanced in years. The disciple recording his death writes with earnest reverence, "He was one whom I can never worthily praise, and yet whom I do not dare to pass over entirely." [23]

The way of the invaders, whether Arians or Catholics, seemed cleared by the victories of the Visigoths over Valens. But it was again partially closed. There remained two nephews of the fallen Emperor, Gratian and his half-brother Valentinian, the elder of the two being but nineteen, the younger but seven years of age. To assist them in the defence of their invaded domains, they or their ministers invited Theodosius, the most illustrious of their generals, to become their colleague. [24] Assuming the administration of the Eastern provinces, the new sovereign instantly opened negotiations with the Visigoths. [25] From them he obtained peace on condition of establishing the strangers on the imperial soil. Thenceforth the thorn remained inextricable from the decaying Empire. [26]

[22] *Πόση τοῦ σταυρωθέντος ἡ ἰσχύς, πόση τοῦ σταυροῦ ἡ δύναμις, πόση τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἡ εὐγένεια, πόση τῆς πίστεως ἡ εὐτονία, πόση τῆς πλάνης ἡ αἰσχύνη, πόσος τῶν δαιμόνων ὁ γέλως.* Postquam Presbyt. Gothus, Hom. VIII.

[23] Auxentius, as before, p. 741. Ulphilas died in 388.

[24] 379. Aur. Vict., Epit., XLVII. 3, XLVIII. 1.

[25] Zos., IV. 25, 26.

[26] "Vestigia fixit
Threicio funesta solo."
CLAUDIAN, *Bell. Get.*, 167.

CHAPTER XXI.

FORCE AND FAITH.

"God's word they had not, but the priest's they had." — DRYDEN.

THE Roman Christians continued in movement. At the present time, the great point was the assertion of the episcopal against the imperial authority. It encountered continual resistance. From the first, it had met the obstacles interposed by the supremacy from which the Roman prelates were seeking to free themselves. More serious obstacles arose on the part of their own followers.

The reason of this is plain. The Roman, that is, the Catholic prelates were conducting a cause of inestimable moment not only to themselves but to those with whom they were connected. To sustain themselves, they demanded implicit submission from their adherents.[1] It was no more, they would urge, than their services deserved. Without it, indeed, their services could not be rendered. The majority of

[1] "We are your rulers," said Gregory to the Nazianzens. "And our power is greater and more absolute than that of your civil rulers." Orat. XVII. tom. I.

those to whom the appeal was made responded to it unhesitatingly. But some demurred as if doubting the wisdom of sacrificing their independence to the authority of their superiors. Others, who were called upon to part with their faith itself, not merely demurred, but actually resisted. Our leaders, they might answer, may be doing great things, but they had better be doing nothing so far as we are concerned, than oblige us to resign our dearest principles. For some years the attention of the Catholic leaders was principally occupied in dealing with their refractory followers.

The scenes ensuing may be conceived. On the one hand, appeared all the power, on the other, all the motion, all the restlessness of the Church. It would be going too far to suppose that all who engaged in the movements of the time were actuated by faith. Yet faith, comparatively speaking, was arrayed on one side, while force was employed upon the other. Not all, of course, possessing dominion, sought to sustain it by forcible means. But the opening contest was mainly one between force and faith.

Amongst the first to rise against their superiors was Aërius of Armenia. His opponents charged him with acting from envy at the appointment of his nearest friend to a bishopric. Such a feeling, had it existed, would probably have been allayed by the summons which Aërius instantly received to be ordained a Presbyter. Far the more probable motive was sensitiveness to the pretensions and the practices at that time prevalent amongst the Christian

prelates. Any particular excitement on the part of Aërius against his former friend and present Bishop would be accounted for by the pain which he experienced in witnessing the transformation of a devout recluse into an assuming prelate. Be this as it may, the resistance of Aërius to ecclesiastical oppression chimes in with the sounds arising from other quarters at the same period. The doctrine by means of which his enemies represent him as having gained the larger number of his disciples, proclaimed the equality of the Presbyter and the Bishop in every truly Christian community.[2] To maintain this was to cut off the claims of the Catholic prelates to the position which they held or which they were striving to hold.

This was not all. Shocked by the immoralities which others supposed to be amply expiated by their fasts and penances, Aërius declared against both the atonement and the sin for which it was offered. Instead of making any allowance for the indulgences to which his followers might be habituated, he compelled them to escape the reach of their ancient temptations. They must deny themselves not only the use but the possession of riches, not only the luxuries of wealth but the necessities of poverty.[3] Notwithstanding the severity of these conditions, a very considerable number attached themselves to Aërius. The churches were closed against them, as were the very towns in which their persecutors held the upper

[2] Epiph., Adv. Hær., lib. III. tom. I., LXXV. 3.

[3] August., De Hæres., 53.

hand. All the more earnest, unquestionably, became the spirit of their leader. During his life, if no longer, remonstrances against the arrogances and the immoralities of the leading Christians continued to be heard and to be sustained.[4] Force had won no triumph over faith.

Another band of resistants was gathered in the opposite extremity of the Empire. Their leader was Priscillian, a Spaniard of high rank and of large fortune. Attracted, as it seems, by speculations[5] but recently introduced from the Eastern provinces, Priscillian lost his confidence in the infallibility of the Catholic dogmas to which he had hitherto adhered. To waver in supporting the dogmatism of the Catholics was to oppose it, in the eyes of its supporters.

Mystical as may have been some of his teachings, others were eminently practical. The greater part of Spain, as the Catholic historian confesses,[6] was soon induced to imitate the austerities as well as to share in the dreamy reveries of Priscillian. Like Aërius, the Spaniard seems to have rebuked the immoral practices of his contemporaries. He exhorted his disciples, if we may trust appearances, to embrace a mode of life more consistent with their religion than that of their brethren or their rulers amongst the Catholics.[7] Whether he set himself directly against the pretensions of the Catholic prelates, does not appear.

[4] He was alive in 375 or thereabouts. Epiph., as before, 1.

[5] "Maxime Gnosticorum et Manichæorum dogmata permixta." August., De Hæres., 70.

[6] Sulp. Sev., II. p 295.

[7] Id., ib. Leo, Ep. 15. Something to the same effect may be drawn from the canons of the council at Saragossa. Conc., tom. II. pp. 1195, 6.

But he had done quite enough to excite them all. To waver in supporting the dogmatism which they had built or were still building up, was one offence. Scarcely less aggravating was the other committed by Priscillian in urging a reform in the morals of their people. It was still more provoking that some of their most distinguished colleagues took part with Priscillian. So general had been this defection in Spain, that when a council was called against him, its members had to be made up from the Gallic province of Aquitaine. By this body, assembled at Saragossa, Priscillian and his principal associates were excommunicated.[8] Far from submitting to the sentence of their colleagues, the prelates of the condemned party, with the intent of strengthening Priscillian's position, ordained him Bishop of Avila. Let the Catholic chronicler narrate the consequences.

He says that the leading Catholics "with unwise policy beset the civil magistrates, in order that by their decrees and prosecutions, the Heretics might be driven from the cities. Accordingly, after many disgraceful petitions, a rescript was obtained from the reigning Emperor Gratian, ordering the whole body of Heretics to be expelled not only from the churches and cities, but beyond the boundaries of Spain."[9] Thus to preserve the control of their dioceses, the Spanish Bishops threw themselves once more upon the imperial authority.

[8] 380 or 381. Sulp. Sev., II. p. 296.

[9] "Quo universi Hæretici excedere non Ecclesiis tantum aut urbibus, sed extra omnes terras propelli jubebantur." Sulp. Sev., II. p. 296.

The party of Priscillian yielded to the force employed against them. He himself, with two of his principal coadjutors, set out at once for Rome in order to seek the revocation of the ordinance by which they and their followers had been banished. Their road lay through Aquitaine, where several of their judges in the council of Saragossa had their sees. Fugitives as they were, and in the province of their adversaries, Priscillian and his companions gained large accessions to the number of their adherents. Arriving at Rome, they vainly sought an interview with the Bishop Damasus, from whom they apparently hoped to obtain redress against the proceedings of his colleagues in Spain. Disappointed in this, the exiles repaired to Milan, where the Bishop Ambrose imitated the example of his Roman brother in refusing to receive them. After thus doing all that they could to bring their grievances before the ecclesiastical authorities, Priscillian and his associates addressed themselves to the imperial authorities. By means of bribes, as their opponents maintained, one of the great officers at court was induced to procure the publication of a second rescript, reversing the provisions of the first, and ordering the restitution of the exiled party to their possessions and their churches in Spain. The day was won by Priscillian, but at the same cost at which his opponents had prevailed, the year before.[10]

Ithacius, the leading Bishop amongst the Spanish Catholics, was obliged to make his escape to Gaul.

[10] Now 381 or 382. Sulp. Sev., II. p. 296.

There he sought the protection of the Præfect, whom he even persuaded to appeal to the sovereign in his behalf. On the other hand, the party of Priscillian acquiring the patronage of the Spanish governor, obtained an order from the court empowering him to sit in judgment upon their antagonists. A second order was procured to arrest the fugitive Ithacius and bring him back to Spain.[11] On both sides, the reliance upon the imperial authority was entire.

Meanwhile, a new claimant to this authority had appeared in the person of a Spaniard. This was Maximus, long holding a military office in Britain, where his troops had lately proclaimed him Emperor.[12] Crossing the channel, he put Gratian to flight and to death. Thereupon he was recognized by Valentinian and Theodosius as their colleague with the sovereignty of Britain, Gaul and Spain.[13] His arrival at Treves, the capital of those three provinces, was anxiously awaited by Ithacius, the Spanish Bishop, whose arrest had been ineffectually ordered by the deceased Emperor. Ithacius laid his case as soon as possible before Maximus, to whom, as his fellow-Spaniard and his fellow-Catholic, he made a confident appeal against his adversaries. Maximus immediately ordered the governors of Gaul and of Spain to transport Priscillian and all of his party to Bordeaux, where the Catholics were at the same time commanded to assemble in council. Priscillian, on appearing before the synod, instantly

[11] Sulp. Sev., II. pp. 296, 297.
[12] 383. Zos., IV. 35.
[13] Zos., IV. 35, 37. Soc., V. 11. Soz., VII. 13.

declared that he appealed to the Emperor, to whom, accordingly, the prelates transferred the judgment of the Heretics.[14]

The contending parties appeared at Treves. Ithacius still led the Spanish Catholics, "more eager to triumph," says their own historian, "than they should have been." No longer satisfied with the banishment, they soon demanded the execution of Priscillian and his associates. Against these fiery appeals no one but a chance visitor at Treves appears to have remonstrated. This was Martin, the Bishop of Tours, long renowned amongst the Catholics of Gaul.[15] To his colleagues from Spain, whose proceedings he happened to be witnessing, he opposed the most earnest expostulations against the violence with which they threatened Priscillian. Meeting with nothing but sneers and charges of being a Heretic himself, Martin turned from the Bishops to the Emperor. Him the generous prelate besought to abstain from shedding the blood of defenceless Christians. "It is enough," he urged, "and more than enough, that Heretics should be condemned by episcopal decisions and so be driven from their churches. But it is an unheard of wrong that the secular power should decide the cause of the Church." So great was the influence of Martin, especially on the noble grounds which he had taken, that the trial of Priscillian and his fellow-prisoners was post-

[14] Probably 384. Sulp. Sev., II. p. 297.

[15] "Lumen nostrum," says his successor, Gregory of Tours, Hist. Franc., I. 36. "Viro plane Apostolis conferendo." Sulp. Sev., II. p. 297.

poned. Nor did the single champion of faith against force depart from Treves until he had prevailed upon the Emperor to promise that no sentence of blood should be pronounced upon the accused.[16]

Force was soon revived against faith. The influence of the Spaniards prevailed upon their Spanish Emperor to commit the trial of Priscillian's party to one of his Præfects. At his orders, apparently, the rack was employed, and from the confessions thus extorted, a report was drawn up, announcing the guilt of Priscillian and his adherents. The prisoners were then brought before the Emperor, by whom the sword of the executioner was called into service. Priscillian was put to death, together with the partners of his trials. Amongst them was an Aquitanian lady of distinction. Her massacre had its counterpart at Bordeaux, where the populace stoned a woman to death on account of her fidelity to Priscillian.[17] Banishment by imperial sentence was pronounced upon others of the same party, including even three "meaner persons . . . . who had betrayed themselves and their companions before the trial at Treves."[18]

Instead of crushing the heresy by the punishment of its leaders, the Spanish Bishops found that they had but increased its growth. The bodies of the slain were carried back to Spain, where they were entombed with magnificent obsequies. On the other hand, the living returned not to enjoy their triumph,

[16] Sulp. Sev., II. p. 297.
[17] Prosper., Chron., Ad Ann. 386.
[18] 385. Sulp. Sev., II. pp. 297, 298.

but to spend the remainder of their days in "foul dissensions," remarks the contemporary annalist, "that could in no way be pacified."[19] Behind them had arisen an almost universal burst of reprobation. "Priests in name," was the cry, "but in reality, guardsmen, nay, executioners, ... who, laying aside their weapons, go with blood-stained hands to offer sacrifice."[20] One Bishop, Theognistus, issued a document against them, declaring himself separated from their communion.[21] Martin of Tours, after yielding to the demands of the Emperor Maximus in their favor, announced that he had been warned by an angel against continuing in communion with them.[22] Ambrose of Milan, unbending as he had been to the representations of Priscillian, was equally unbending to the representations of his destroyers. Coming to the court of Maximus, he refused to communicate with the Emperor or with those whom he had sustained in pursuing Priscillian to the death.[23] Not until Maximus died, could the indignation against the Spanish Bishops take positive effect. A sentence of deposition was then passed against Ithacius. Another leading prelate saved himself only by resigning his episcopate.[24] Again had force failed to triumph over faith.

Resistance to authority soon afterwards broke out

[19] Sulp. Sev., II. p 298.

[20] Pan. Vet., Latin. Pacat., XII. 29.

"Shall it be said that we of God are taught,
While Christian Christian tears, in fierce onslaught
With weapons fetched from carnal armouries?" ALFORD.

[21] Sulp. Sev., Dial. III p. 347.

[22] Id., ib.

[23] Ambros., Ep. 24, ad fin.

[24] Sulp. Sev., II. p. 298. Prosper., Chron., Ad Ann. 390.

at the centre of the Church and of the Empire. A feeling of hostility against the austerities enforced and observed by many of the leading prelates had gradually spread amongst the masses, both Christian and Heathen. Nowhere in the Western provinces had the increase of asceticism or of the opposition which it excited been more notable than at Rome. The burial of a high-born woman, understood to have been destroyed by her incessant fasts, was attended by crowds shouting imprecations against "the detestable race of monks." "Why is it not stoned?" they cried, "Why is it not driven into the waves?"[25] Within a few years, one of "the detestable race" came out against the abuses of the system to which he had devoted himself. This was the Italian Jovinian, of little cultivation, if his adversaries are to be trusted, but of very remarkable determination. His resistance to the Catholics in authority was not confined to denouncing the evils by which the monastic system had been corrupted. Jovinian declared against the only basis upon which the system could rest, as well as against the only forms which it could assume, in proclaiming that there was no such virtue in celibacy as its supporters averred.[26] It lent an additional earnestness to his arguments that the Bishop of Rome had but lately asserted the necessity of celibacy, not only to the

[25] Hier., Ep. 22. "Qualem putas," exclaims the indignant Jerome, "ad istas voces Christum habuisse tristitiam, quomodo exultasse Satanam!"

[26] Hier., Adv. Jovin., passim. "It was not because he was married or because he wished to be married," says Augustine. De Hæres., 82.

monks, but likewise to the priests beneath his jurisdiction.

The same motive that had led Aërius and Priscillian to attempt a reformation in morals, undoubtedly operated upon Jovinian. That he preached the necessity of greater purity, may be fairly inferred from the reproaches of license cast upon him by his unscrupulous opponents. One way, and the readiest, of controverting a reformer, is to accuse him of indulging in the very error against which he is contending. Jovinian may be believed to have pleaded for morality of life amongst the Christians.

The first steps towards silencing and punishing the offender appear to have been taken by his own brethren. An address was made to the Bishop of Rome, stating the principles which Jovinian was maintaining, and calling for their formal condemnation. Sentence was presently passed by a council of the Roman clergy pronouncing the excommunication of the audacious monk with all the principal persons of his party.[27] They made their way to Milan, in the hope of obtaining protection from Bishop Ambrose. But he, too, took part against them, and they were driven out from Milan, baffled and excommunicated.[28]

Not the less boldly did Jovinian pursue his course. Prevented from meeting his fellow-Christians face to face, he sought them by his writings. Such was the effect produced by these, or apprehended

[27] 390 or thereabouts. Siric., Ep. II. ap. Conc., tom. II. pp. 1218, 1219.

[28] Ambros., Ep. 42.

from them, that the advocates of the austerities which he opposed were obliged to invoke the aid of their great champion, Jerome. After various labors both in the eastern and in the western provinces, Jerome, becoming more and more devoted to monastic principles, settled himself in a colony of monks and nuns at Bethlehem. His labors as a translator of the Scriptures had been mingled with a succession of polemical efforts in favor of the authority and the doctrine on which he believed his faith to be dependent.[29] No one had a greater mass of decided opinions, nor could any one uphold his sentiments with a greater flow of deep erudition or of impetuous ire. It needed no urging[30] to bring out all his energy against the monk who had dared to denounce the cardinal points of monasticism. Nor did Jerome misunderstand the fact that Jovinian was shaking the foundations not only of the monastic but of the entire ecclesiastical system.

Out burst a torrent of indignation. Two treatises, soon followed by a third, were issued from the monastery at Bethlehem. The efficacy of the observances and of the doctrines denied by Jovinian was asserted in vindictive terms. "These words," writes Jerome, referring to the propositions of the Italian, "these are hissings of the old serpent. . . . . This is following vices, not virtues, Jovinian, not the Apostle Paul. . . . . It is allowing license to at-

[29] Immobilem Catholicæ turrim Ecclesiæ contra perfidorum jacula consummavit." Gennadius, De Scr. Eccl., Hieronymus.

[30] "And thought the voice of wrath a sacred call."
BYRON.

tempt the overthrow of the Cross!"[31] With gibes of this kind, Jerome sent forth a train of sober arguments, supported by proofs and citations from the most various sources. The plea of Jovinian in behalf of the affections, and of the purity in which they might be safely cultivated, met with no favor at the hands of his adversary.[32] Neither was the ardent devotee to the ceremonies and to the dogmas of the Catholic Church, disposed to yield a jot in view of the remonstrances which Jovinian had made against them. The question was narrowed down to the right of Jovinian to broach opinions directly or indirectly contradicting those of his superiors. Jerome did not scruple to deny the existence of such a right on the part of Jovinian or of any other member of the Church.

Jerome's intemperate publications rather embarrassed than strengthened his brethren in Italy. Obliged to deny that they went to equal lengths with him in advocating the monastic or the ecclesiastical system, they seem to have lost, instead of having gained ground. "It was boasted," says the contemporary of the combatants, amongst the followers of Jovinian, "that the only way to answer him, was to vituperate matrimony."[33] The number, at all events the courage of the party consequently increased. Judging from a passage in a letter from

[31] Adv. Jovin., lib. I. p. 146, lib. II. p. 227.

[32] "Quidquid tragœdiæ tument, et domos, urbes, regnaque subvertit, uxorum pellicumque contentio est." Lib. I. p. 191. See Ep. 30, Apol. ad Pamm.

[33] "Joviniano responderi non potuisse cum laude, sed cum vituperatione nuptiarum." August., Retract., II. 22.

Ambrose of Milan, they scattered themselves throughout Italy to denounce the subservience of the Catholics to their rulers, and to the fasts and penances which their rulers imposed. Two inmates of a monastery at Milan threw up their connection with their establishment to go in search of converts at Vercelli.[34] It was probably but one of many similar instances. Of Jovinian himself but indirect information remains that he continued his labors at Rome, despite the sentences of councils and the invectives of their champions.[35]

Near twenty years had passed since the outbursts of Jerome, when the Emperor then reigning received the complaints of the Italian Bishops against "the sacrilegious assemblies held by Jovinian without the walls of the most sacred city of Rome." The Emperor commands "the above-mentioned person to be arrested and beaten with leaded scourges, then to be exiled, with all his accomplices and ministers. . . . . If any one should cleave to the party thus prohibited and condemned," concludes the decree, "let him expect still severer punishment."[36] This was more of a triumph than force had as yet achieved over faith.

The Emperor thus oppressing Jovinian was the son and successor of Theodosius. The father plays a conspicuous part amongst those by whom force was directed against all faith at variance with their

[34] Ambros., Ep. 63.

[35] Jerome writes of him as dead about the year 405. Adv. Vigilant., tom IV. pars II. p. 281.

[36] Cod. Theod., lib. XVI. tit. V. 53. The date of the edict is 412.

own. A sovereign of naturally easy disposition,[37] he was so strongly wrought upon by the representations of the Catholic leaders as to become their agent in persecution. Hardly had he ascended the throne, when he published a law forbidding all besides the Catholics "to embrace the name of Christians, ... or to give the name of Churches to their assemblies, under pain of the Divine vengeance as well as of the imperial wrath."[38]

If the faith of the Heretical Christians could have been annihilated, it would certainly have met its end in the memorable council at Constantinople in the second year of Theodosius's reign.[39] The most distinguished of the Eastern prelates, headed by the Nazianzen Gregory, lately appointed to the Constantinopolitan see,[40] decided in full and unrelenting terms against all Heretical parties. "The faith of the three hundred and eighteen fathers who met at Nice must not be set aside," begin the canons of the council at Constantinople. "Rather must it remain in authority, while every heresy must be anathematized."[41] The Arian creed with its numer-

[37] Ἐχμελὴς ἦν καὶ πάσῃ ῥᾳθυμίᾳ ἐκκείμενος. Eunap., Frag., p. 111.

[38] The test of Catholicity was in following the religion "quam divinum Petrum Apostolum tradidisse Romanis, ... quamque Pontificem Damasum sequi claret, et Petrum Alexandriæ Episcopum, virum Apostolicæ sanctitatis. Hoc est, ut, secundum Apostolicam disciplinam evangelicamque doctrinam, Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti unam Deitatem sub parili majestate et sub pia Trinitate credamus." Cod. Theod., lib. xvi tit. i. 2. So ib., ib., tit. v. 5, 6.

[39] 381. Soc., v. 8. Theod., v. 8, 9.

[40] He was soon obliged to leave the field to younger or more ardent men. See his Carm., Ad Constantinopol. Sacerd., 1005 *et seq.*, De Episcopis, 136 *et seq.*, and his epistles to his successor Nectarius, 88, 91. He died about 390.

[41] Can. 1. Conc, tom. ii. p. 1123.

ous subdivisions occupies the most prominent position in the list of the heresies which the Catholic prelates declare to be ended for ever.[42]

The same council accepted the system of ecclesiastical centralization proposed at Sardica, upwards of thirty years before. "The Bishop of Constantinople," proclaim the prelates of the East, "must hold the next and highest honors to those held by the Bishop of Rome."[43] In other words, the supremacy of the Roman see was acknowledged by the Eastern Catholics, as it had already been by their Western brethren.

To carry out their measures, the prelates assembled at Constantinople had recourse to the Emperor. To him they submitted their "definitions confirming the faith of their fathers at Nice," as well as their "canons relating to the organization of the Churches."[44] Theodosius entered at once into all their purposes. The pains and penalties by which their authority could be enforced were not stinted. The Heretical Christians found themselves successively deprived of their possessions[45] and their personal privileges,[46] fined,[47] banished,[48] and in some instances, condemned to death.[49] "Let them do nothing," ordered one law, "that can interfere with the sanctity of the Catholics."[50]

[42] Can. 1, p. 1126, can. 7, p. 1130.
[43] Can. 3., p. 1126.
[44] Conc. Ep., p. 1123.
[45] Cod. Theod., lib. xvi. tit. v. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12.
[46] Ib., ib., 7, 12, 14, 17, 22, 23.
[47] Ib., ib., 8, 21.
[48] Ib., ib., 13, 14, 18, 19, 20.
[49] Ib., ib., 9. This was in 382, therefore before the execution of Priscillian. A law of 398 repeats the penalty. Ib., ib., 34.
[50] Ib., ib., 11.

"Let the madness of the Heretics," enjoined a later and still more decisive statute, "attempt neither to renew its doctrines nor to hold its unlawful gatherings. Let it nowhere either teach or learn its profane precepts. Nor shall the priests of the aforesaid Heretics dare to communicate the faith which they have not or to ordain ministers who are not. Let not their audacity be overlooked by the connivance of our officers to whom this matter is entrusted by our paternal commands." [51]

Equally paternal commands were issued against the Heathen. [52] Never had there been a more striking array of champions on the side of the ancient faith, than when Libanius and Themistius upheld it in the East, while Prætextatus and Symmachus maintained it in the West. But it was the sunset that gave length to their shadows upon the ancient annals. An early decree of Theodosius, appointing severe punishments for apostates from the Christian religion, was soon followed by measures against the votaries of Heathenism. [53] It was perhaps in obedience to Theodosius that his younger colleague Gratian put off the title of Chief Pontiff, [54] hitherto worn

[51] Cod. Theod., lib. xvi. tit. v. 24. "The best thing that can be said for him [Theodosius] is, that he was not, on these occasions, as bad as his word, but threatened more than he performed." Jortin, Pref. to Rem. on Eccl. History.

[52] Now called Pagans, "ex locorum agrestium compitis et pagis." Oros., Hist., Lib. i., Præf.

[53] Cod. Theod., lib. xvi. tit. vii. 1. Renewed in Ib., ib., 2, 3. So lib. xi. tit. xxxix. 11.

[54] Zos., iv. 36. According to the usual interpretation of this passage, Gratian had borne the title for some years. This, with the

by the Christian Emperors, while he deprived the Heathen priesthoods of their immunities and revenues.[55] At the same time, the altar of Victory was removed from the senate-house at Rome.[56] A few years brought out a succession of edicts in both the eastern and the western provinces, prohibiting sacrifices and ordering the temples not only to be closed, but to be destroyed.[57] The plea of Libanius in favor of preserving the Heathen shrines illustrates at once the helplessness of their worshippers and the oppressiveness of their Christian sovereigns. He asks that the temples should be maintained for the purpose not of honoring the Heathen deities, but of decorating the imperial cities. "I think tribute," he adds, "to be of importance to the treasury. Let these stand, then, and be taxed."[58] But the humbler the tone of the Heathen, the more imperious appeared that of the Christians, both subjects and sovereigns. The very clergy took it upon themselves to join in the hue and cry, assailing the Heathen and levelling their proudest temples with the dust.[59]

So far was force triumphant. But over what faith was the triumph achieved? Over one which could offer no resistance; one whose strength was

notorious indifference of Gratian, compared with the notorious zeal of Theodosius, incline one to think that Gratian was merely complying with his colleagues' demands.

[55] Ap. Cod. Theod., lib. xvi. tit. x. 20.

[56] See the letter of Symmachus (x. 54) demanding its restoration.

[57] Cod. Theod., lib. xvi. tit. x. 7 *et seq.*

[58] Orat. xxviii. See Lardner, Test. Anc. Heath., ch. 49, where an abstract of the plea will be found.

[59] "Si ch' a pugnar, per accender la Fede,
Dell' Evangelio fero scudi e lance."
Paradiso.

exhausted in mere endurance, mere existence through its protracted agonies. They who believed in Heathenism gathered from it no power that could sustain them against their oppressors. It could not sustain itself. As a vapor yielding to the fierce north wind, the ancient faith yielded to force, and sank away.

Not so with the Christian faith. In the first place, it did not succumb to mere force. Faith was on the side of those who opposed as well as of those who upheld such as Aërius, Priscillian or Jovinian. In the second place, the faith of the restless was not overwhelmed by the faith any more than by the force of the powerful. "Immovable," exclaimed Ambrose of Milan, "immovable stands the Church as though built upon the Apostolic rock."[60] Its supports, however, were not so profound as the ardent prelate maintained. For they were the laws of prelates and of sovereigns as well as of the Deity. On such foundations there could be no power that was immovable, no one that was invincible. It might resist the waves. It might beat them back and down. But they would rise anew. Once and again would faith contend with force.[61]

[60] "Itaque non immerito inter tot mundi freta Ecclesia Domini, tanquam supra Apostolicam ædificata petram, immobilis manet." Ep. 2.

[61] "Though hush'd awhile, that sounding flood
Shall roll in joy through ages yet to be!"
HEMANS.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE PRELATE AND THE SOVEREIGN.

"Imperator enim intra Ecclesiam, non supra Ecclesiam est."
AMBROSIUS, *Serm. cont. Auxent.*, p. 873.

THE authority of the Catholic prelate over his people was at least temporarily established. It was still to be asserted against his sovereign. But to have established it over his people, though only for a time, was equivalent to having gained the great point on which depended the assertion of the episcopal against the imperial authority. Already were the Emperors but the nominal masters of their subjects in comparison with the actual masters who had appeared in the Catholic prelates.

This, however, was not perceived. The sovereign still seemed to be paramount. The prelate, like any other subject, still seemed to be dependent. Had he a cause to sustain, he was obliged to resort to other means than an independent ruler would have employed. But had the Emperor an order to give, he gave it amidst his courtiers and his guards, expecting to be obeyed. It was only in the course of time that the sovereign became dependent, while the pre-

late assumed an independent position in the eyes of men.

A few years after the accession of Theodosius, John, surnamed Chrysostom, was ordained a Presbyter at Antioch.[1] The second twelvemonth of his ministry had not yet passed when he was obliged to assume an office that marks the station to which the Christian priest had risen. A season of want and of severe taxation had roused the people of Antioch, at all times excitable, to open sedition. In the course of their tumults, the images of the Emperor and of his family were stoned and destroyed throughout the city.[2] The day of frenzy soon ended, leaving its victims overwhelmed with apprehensions of the vengeance to be taken by their offended sovereign. The Christians, forming the majority of the affrighted inhabitants, beset the churches, in one of which the Presbyter Chrysostom was waiting to address them.

"What am I to say?" he begins. "Or what shall I utter? The injury is irremediable. The wound is profound, beyond the reach of human healing. It needs relief from above..... This city so great, the chief of all in the East, is in danger of being swept away from the earth."[3] A priest of any religion might have used the same words to chime in with the terrors of the multitude. But no one except a

[1] 386. Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom xi. p. 558, note xvi.

[2] 387. Zos., iv. 41. Soz., vii. 23. Theod., v. 20. Chrysostom (Ad Pop. Antioch., Hom. ii. ad init.) ascribes the sedition to "certain foreigners."

[3] Ad Pop. Antioch., Hom. ii. pp. 21, 25, ed. Mogunt., tom. i.

Christian could have added the exhortation which Chrysostom went on to deliver. "Shake off your woe! Let us return to our usual habits! And as we have been wont to come hither always with joy, so let us come now, casting all things upon God. . . . . And if He sees that our allegiance is not shaken by our present trials, He will soon relieve us and bring us safe from out the impending storm. . . . . We cannot be so careful for our preservation as He who hath made us."[4] Day after day, through the Lent that was then commencing, the voice of Chrysostom repeated the same assurances.[5] Fearful punishments, inflicted and expected, did not change the tone of the preacher. "Your Emperor," he urges, "hath been much less outraged by this sedition, than your Creator hath been by your daily transgressions."[6] The attention of the hearers could not have been more effectually turned from their dependence upon man to their dependence upon God.

The part of Chrysostom amongst his people was of the greater importance in consequence of the schism still rending the Church of Antioch. The covenant between Meletius and his competitor, that the survivor of the two should reunite the divided functions of the episcopate, had been utterly violated. Two Bishops continued to dispute the possession of the see. In such circumstances, neither had the power to assert or to prove himself the leader of the Chris-

[4] Ad Pop. Antioch., Hom. II. p. 25.

[5] Hom. III. p. 49; XIII. p. 148. The Emperor threatened to burn the city. Hom. XVII. p. 192. So Theod., v. 20.

[6] Hom. III. pp. 48, 49.

tians, unless the injured dignity of his episcopate was repaired by personal endowments of his own. Much less could he assume the lead in crossing so troubled a waste as that now open within Antioch. Chrysostom, strong in his affections as in his powers, was the actual guide of the Antioch Christians during the tempest.

One of the Bishops, Flavian, the same by whom Chrysostom had been ordained, gave all the support that he could to the trying situation of his Presbyter. Probably at Chrysostom's suggestion, undoubtedly with his approval, Flavian set out for Antioch to appeal to the Emperor at Constantinople. Upon his departure, the people are again addressed by their preacher. He bids them send their prayers as embassies to the King of Heaven, while their intercessor upon the earth is seeking the presence of Theodosius.[7] The confidence in which Chrysostom contrasts the authority of the Emperor with that of the Bishop heightens the effect of his discourse. "He also," he exclaims in reference to Flavian, "he himself is a ruler, and the more powerful ruler of the two. For the sacred laws have subjected to his hands the imperial head; and when anything good is needed from Heaven, the Emperor is wont to appeal to the Priest, not the Priest to the Emperor. The Priest hath his breastplate, that of righteousness. He hath his girdle likewise, that of truth. He hath his sandals, and far more honorable ones than the sovereign's, for they are those of the gospel of peace.

[7] Hom. III. pp. 40, 41.

He hath his sword, moreover, not of iron, but of the Spirit. A crown rests upon his head. This is the more glorious panoply. These are the more awful arms. This is the greater strength, and this the higher power." [8]

The commissioners charged with the imperial sentence, depriving the guilty city of all its ornaments and privileges,[9] were met by Flavian on his way to Constantinople. Apparently he prevailed upon them to suspend their proceedings until the result of his appeal to the Emperor could be made known. Quickening his journey, he confronted his incensed sovereign with words in harmony with those of his Presbyter at Antioch.[10] His demands were supported by the representations of one of the commissioners just returned to the capital, as well as by the entreaties of the Senate and people at Constantinople. Theodosius yielded.[11] Indeed he was so singularly impressed as to write to his subjects at Antioch, apologizing for his rashness in condemning them and lamenting that it had resulted in the death of any amongst their number. Flavian hastened home in time to keep the festival of Easter with his people and their guardian Presbyter. The priest had proved himself, as Chrysostom had asserted, "the more powerful ruler."

[8] Hom. III. p. 41.

[9] Hom. XVII. p. 196. Liban., Orat. XIX.

[10] The journey and the interview are fully described in the last of Chrysostom's twenty-one homilies.

[11] Hom. XXI.; Liban., Orat. XXI. Libanius describes himself as having gone to Constantinople on the same errand with Flavian. But it is merely a figure of speech to express his interest in the fate of his towns-people. See his own statement, Orat. I. *Περὶ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ τύχης*, tom. I. pp. 151 *et seq.*

This, too, he had proved himself by worthy means. Nothing in the exhortations of Chrysostom before the people, nothing in the remonstrances of Flavian before the Emperor, had been at variance with the law of love. The course of the leaders at Antioch had been as meek as it was resolute. Had they been imitated by the Catholic leaders elsewhere, the prelate would have more truly risen in contrast with the sovereign.

The cause of the prelate soon fell into different hands. Ambrose, the governor of Northern Italy, was residing at Milan, when the city was convulsed by an election to its vacant bishopric. To quell the tumults in the church where the canvass was proceeding, the governor found it necessary to proceed with his guards amongst the combatants. No sooner had he appeared, than the cry was raised amongst the crowd that Ambrose must be their Bishop. No other seemed so fit to be their spiritual head as the imperial official who stood commanding in their presence. Nor was this the impression of the multitude alone. The clergy joined in the clamor. Sincerely, it would seem, but fruitlessly did the governor assert his unfitness for the appointment. The uproar which he had come to quell broke out anew on his refusal of the episcopate. At length assenting, Ambrose was proclaimed. With no other preliminaries than submission to the rite of baptism, he was ordained Bishop of Milan.[12]

[12] 374. Paulin., Vit. Ambros., 6–9. Soc., IV. 30. Soz., VI. 24. Theod., IV. 7.

"Let the reader for a moment suppose that the Bishop of London was to be elected by the people as-

Strange seems this mode of making a prelate. But the want of leaders able in administration and in strife was more generally felt amongst the Catholics than the need of peaceful or spiritual teachers. The humbler class had disappeared from all the more prominent sees. Full in the foreground were the prouder prelates, striving with one another, as with their people, as with their sovereigns. Amongst this class Ambrose of Milan was prepared to take the foremost place.

He was not without a sense of his spiritual deficiencies. To prove his humility at the same time that he was expected to prove his pride, Ambrose hesitated at no exertions, at no sacrifices. His large possessions were at once surrendered to meet the wants of the Church over which he had been raised.[13] Himself he gave up to fasts and unsparing toils. He had been a luxurious governor. He would be a frugal Bishop. He had applied himself to the culture required by the imperial magistrate. He would devote himself to that required by the Christian ruler. "You have undertaken," he wrote to another in words that must first have been breathed to himself, "you have undertaken the duties of the priesthood; and sitting at the helm of the Church,

sembled in St. Paul's; that this election became very stormy, and that, bloodshed being apprehended, the then Sir Arthur Wellesley having the command there, sallied from the Tower with a detachment of the military to restore order; — that on his appearance in the church the people had instantly acclaimed him Bishop." State of Man subsequent to Christianity, Part II. p. 105, note.

[13] Paulin., Vit. Ambros., 38. "Sollicitus etiam nimium," says the admiring biographer, "pro pauperibus et captivis." His later liberalities to the captives made in the Gothic invasion are defended by himself, De Off., II. 28.

you are guiding it amidst the waves. Hold fast," he adds, "that the great gales of this present age may not destroy you." [14] Ambrose was soon recognized as one of the most trustworthy helmsmen of his stormy times. "And Ambrose himself," writes his younger contemporary, "as the world counts happy, I esteemed a happy man whom personages so great held in great honor . . . . I could not ask of him what I would as I would, being shut out both from his ear and speech by multitudes of busy people whose weaknesses he served. When he was not engrossed by them, (and there was but little time when he was not,) he was either refreshing his body with the sustenance absolutely necessary, or refreshing his mind with reading. . . . . Ofttimes when we had come, (for no man was forbidden to enter, nor was it his wont that any who came should be formally announced,) we saw him reading to himself, and never otherwise." [15]

From these calmer pursuits Ambrose was constantly diverted by the struggles into which his character and his position impelled him. He had not held the episcopate for many days when he came in contact with the imperial power. The elder Valentinian, then reigning over the western provinces, resided at Milan amidst his host of courtiers and officials. What the practices of these were, none knew better than he who had lately been high in rank amongst them. Against some of their number

[14] Ep. 2. A line from one of Ambrose's hymns,

"Donet [Pater] gerendi gratiam!"

might have been his motto. Hymn. VII. tom. II. p. 1222.

[15] Augustin., Confess., VI. 3.

the Bishop laid vehement charges before the Emperor. Says Valentinian, impressed with the generous courage of Ambrose, "I have long been acquainted with this boldness of speech which thou art wont to use. Yet though I knew it well, I made no opposition, but rather lent my assistance to your ordination. Go on, then, healing our spiritual diseases, as the Divine law commandeth." So far the historian.[16] But the words ascribed to Valentinian imply that he went on to warn the courageous Bishop against attempting to meddle with the temporal affairs of the Empire.

Valentinian was succeeded at Milan by his son of the same name under the regency of Justina the Empress. As an Arian, her predilections were against Ambrose and the Catholics on his side. Justina had set her heart upon securing the elevation of an Arian to the important bishopric of Sirmium, in Western Illyria. To accomplish her desire, the Empress went in person to Sirmium, whither Ambrose appears to have been called by the ecclesiastical authorities in order to conduct the election. On the day assigned, the church was filled with a throng of Arians excited to the highest degree by the presence of the Empress. In opposing her will Ambrose, it seemed, stood virtually alone. One of the nuns collected with the clergy to take part in the election, approached the Bishop of Milan, and seizing his robe, attempted to draw him from his place. "Fear thou the judgment of God!"

[16] Theod., IV. 7. This was at the beginning of 375.

he cried. Then bidding her retire, he probably resumed his exhortations to the assembled Catholics that they should present a bolder front to their adversaries. The contest proved a protracted one. But on the sudden death of the nun who had ventured to lay hands on Ambrose, the spirits of her party sank so low, that the Catholics elected their candidate in triumph.[17]

The Empress returned to Milan to devise revenge upon the Bishop by whom her wishes had been confounded. Apparently at her demand, her step-son Gratian ordered the sequestration of a Catholic church for the use of the Arians at Milan. Ambrose speaks of the act as intended by Gratian "to prove the faith" of his Catholic subjects. So soon was the church restored to them, under the influence of Ambrose, that he had barely begun to prepare for the battle when he found himself victor.[18]

It was not long afterwards that Justina was obliged to throw herself upon the magnanimity of the Bishop. Maximus, whose usurpation had cost Gratian his life, was threatening to invade the realms of the younger Valentinian. To hinder his march, the Empress had neither troops nor fortifications to employ with any hope of success. She had recourse to Ambrose, to whom she led her young son, entreating the Bishop "to go ambassador to the foe."[19] "It was a high office,"[20] says Ambrose,

[17] 380 or 381. Paulin., Vit. Ambros., 11.

[18] 381. Ambros., De Spirit. Sanct., I. 1.

[19] 383. De Obit. Valent. Cons., 28.

[20] Ep. 24.

departing at the opening of winter to cross the Alps in search of the usurper at whose approach all Italy was trembling. "I would willingly have stopped up the mountain-passes with my body," he said afterwards. "And Maximus complained," affirmed Ambrose, "that he was prevented by my embassy from descending into Italy."[21] It is certain that peace was concluded amongst the sovereigns.

Almost immediately after his return to Milan, Ambrose had occasion to claim the reward of his services. The Heathen members of the Roman Senate had borne it ill that Gratian should have commanded the altar of Victory to be removed from their hall of assembly. Upon the death of the Emperor who had ordered the removal, a petition was drawn in the name of the Senate demanding the restoration of the shrine.[22] Addressed to Theodosius as well as to the youthful Valentinian, the memorial was presented to the latter sovereign, as the one on whom the petitioners might naturally hope to make the strongest impression. With the restitution of the altar of Victory, the restitution of the privileges until recently in possession of the Heathen and their priests was also claimed. Ambrose at once opposed the demands of the Senators. Quickly, as the case required, the Bishop drew up his own memorial, and with all the weight which his recent acts could give to his expostulations, he brought them before the sovereign.

[21] Ep. 20.

[22] Symmach., Ep., x. 54. Ambros., Ep. 17.

"All men," he begins, "within the Roman realms, serve you who are their Princes and Emperors. But ye yourselves must at the same time serve the Omnipotent God and His holy religion. . . . . They who complain of being injured are those who never spared our race, who destroyed our churches. . . . . Why, if their privileges had not been taken away before, I should approve of their being taken away by your authority . . . . . If, however, you decide upon restitution, then we Bishops can never bear it patiently. You may come to our churches. But you will find no priests in them, or the priests who are there will deny you admission. What will you answer then to the priest who says, The Church hath no need of thy gifts, since thou hast decked the temples of the Heathen; the Altar of Christ rejects thy offerings inasmuch as thou hast built up an altar to idols!"[23] "Let Rome demand some other favor," replied the young sovereign to the Heathen Senators. "I owe affection to her as to a parent. But I owe obedience to the Author of my salvation!"[24]

The efforts of the Arians to recover their lost ground were met by the same determination on the part of Ambrose. So effectual was his resistance to the renewed desires of the Empress Justina for the possession of one of the Milanese churches, that it appears to have been seriously attempted to remove him by main force from the city.[25] At length he received a formal demand, in the name of the Em-

[23] Ep. 17.
[24] Ambros., De Ob. Val., 20.
[25] Paulin., Vit. Ambros., 12.

peror, that not only one but two of the churches held by the Catholics should be by them conceded to the Arians.[26] "I replied as was right," he says, in a letter to his sister, "that God's temple could not be delivered up by its priest." Seeing that the crisis had arrived, Ambrose seems to have summoned his people to meet him on the following day.

To them, apparently, he then related the demand that had been made upon him and his answer. Their acclamations were ringing through the church when the Præfect, second in authority to the Emperor, entered to urge the surrender of the basilica called the Portian that stood without the walls of the city. The multitude cried out against his proposal, and he withdrew, declaring that the question must be decided by the Emperor.

The next day was Sunday, the beginning of Passion week. Ambrose was engaged in lecturing to his communicants, when the intelligence arrived that the Portian basilica had been seized by officers from the court. Some of the congregation hurried forth to the scene of action. Ambrose remained, notwithstanding the temptation to accompany them, to conclude the services of the morning. He was again interrupted by the report that an Arian priest was in bodily danger from the hands of the Catholics. The Bishop at once despatched some of his clergy to rescue the priest from the excited multitude, upon whom the imperial authorities were swift in inflicting punishment. Two hundred pounds of gold

[26] 385. Ambros., Ep. 20.

were exacted from the corporation of traders, whose members had taken the lead in the disturbances. "They answer," says Ambrose, "that they will pay as much, nay, twice as much, if they be allowed to preserve their faith." The prisons were soon filled with individuals arrested on the charge of contumacy or sedition. To secure their trial, apparently, before judges in whom the Arian party could confide, the officers of the public tribunals were actually commanded to keep themselves within doors. "The persecution was in full blast," says the indignant Bishop.

A day or two appears to have passed, when Ambrose was accosted anew by the imperial officers. They demanded the formal surrender of the church which their sovereigns had already seized. "Ask what is mine," he answered, "although all that is mine belongs to the poor, and I will not refuse it to you. But what is Divine doth not come under the imperial dominion." Meanwhile the church was guarded by armed men, against whom the Catholic inhabitants seemed to be preparing an assault. The Bishop was ordered to keep the people tranquil. "It is in my power," he answered, "not to rouse them, but it is in God's hand alone to pacify them. If ye regard me as the author of the prevailing excitement, then punish me, or send me to any solitudes that ye will!" A word from Ambrose would have calmed the whole commotion. But the day wore away in vain attempts to bend the will of the prelate to that of the sovereign.

On the morrow, Ambrose left his rooms before

dawn to find the church in which he had held out during the preceding days surrounded with the soldiery. The people again gathered about the sanctuary, "encompassing it," says their Bishop, "with their groans." The lessons of the day were in course of being read, when Ambrose was informed that one of the churches claimed by the Arians was filled with Catholics demanding to have services held there, notwithstanding the troops in watch about the building. Some of the soldiers came into the church where the Bishop was officiating, declaring, however, "that they came to prayer, and not to combat." From that moment Ambrose felt himself safe. The very force which his sovereigns had sent out against him had ranged itself upon his side. He instantly began his discourse to the mingled throng. "Ye have heard the lessons from the book of Job. . . . . In these ye see the power of temptation granted to the devil in order that good men may be proved. . . . . Ye know how many means have all at once been employed against us, Goths, arms, Heathen, fines of traders, punishments of saints. Look ye at what was commanded when we were commanded to deliver the basilica . . . . . Even to act against God. For it was commanded that we should deliver the altars of God. . . . . To such commands therefore, I reply that it is neither lawful for me to deliver nor for thee, O Emperor, to receive. . . . . Palaces belong to the sovereign, but churches to the prelate. The control of public, not of sacred buildings is in thy hands, O Emperor!"

Strange words were these to be uttered in pres-

ence of troops and subjects. But stranger still were the tidings presently reported that the imperial authorities had resigned the church which they had seized. "The basilica is crowded, "continued the messengers, addressing the Bishop, "demanding thy presence." Ambrose broke out into enthusiastic expressions of triumph. "I have found defenders," he cried, "in those whom I thought to be mine enemies . . . . . Whose grace, whose work is this but Thine, O Lord Jesus? . . . . Death was before my eyes. Thou, O Lord, didst interpose Thyself between me and my oppressors!"

The triumph was not yet complete. Hardly had the sovereigns resolved to withdraw from the contest, than they determined to enter upon it again. A messenger from the court came to Ambrose with orders from the Emperor. The orders turned out to be reproaches. "What was your object," asked the officer, "in acting contrary to the imperial pleasure? . . . . If you would play the tyrant, the Emperor would know it, in order that he may prepare himself against you." "Why should the Emperor delay his vengeance, if he imagines me to be a tyrant?" rejoined the Bishop. "Thrones have been given, but not usurped by priests," he continued, probably referring to the events of Hebrew history. "Indeed it hath been a common rumor that Emperors have desired the priesthood more than priests have desired empire. Christ fled that he might not be made a king. . . . . Nor have priests ever been tyrants," concluded Ambrose, "though they have often suffered from tyrants." The messenger retired,

not, it may be believed, without leaving behind him menaces that his master would yet have his own way. Troops, more ready, perhaps, than their comrades of the morning to do battle for the sovereign against the prelate, hemmed in the church, where Ambrose, "in grief," was obliged to pass the night.[27]

The morrow brought the day "in which," wrote Ambrose, "the Lord gave Himself up for us."[28] The services began as usual in the blockaded church. Taking advantage of the lessons for the morning, the Bishop prophesied "the return of sinners to repentance." His predictions were suddenly fulfilled. Orders were issued to withdraw the troops from their stations around the basilica. At the same time, it was commanded that the amount levied upon the traders should be repaid to them. "What was the joy," exclaims the Bishop, triumphant at last, "the applause, the thanksgiving of the entire population!" The very soldiers rushed into the church, proclaiming the commands which they had received, and kissing the altar in token of peace. "If Ambrose bade you," said the young Emperor to some of his officers, "ye would surrender me in chains!" "And had I my pleasure," cried a eunuch of the court to the Bishop, "I would slay thee!" "Then I," replied Ambrose, "should be suffering what Bishops can suffer, while thou wouldst be doing what eunuchs can do."[29]

Some months elapsed. An edict then published

[27] "Exactus est totus ille dies in mærore nostro." Ep. 20.

[28] Thursday of Passion week.

[29] The account of all these occurrences is given by Ambrose in Ep. xx.

from the palace of Valentinian gave note of his intention to resume the contest in which he had succumbed. After giving the imperial sanction to the acts of the councils in which the Arians of yore had triumphed, the statute proceeds to authorize Arian assemblies. "And if others," continues the edict, "attempt aught against our commands, they shall pay the penalty of treason with their life and their blood."[30] Much the same course that had already been taken was again adopted to extort the consent of Ambrose to the demands of his sovereigns. The threat of death contained in the law was not spared by those who undertook to see the law executed. Then they decided in favor of his exile as not likely to provoke so great a disturbance amongst his people. But while the counsels of his adversaries wavered, his own resolutions were unmoved. Nor did the devotion of his adherents diminish so much as increase amidst the perils to which they exposed themselves in daily services and in nightly vigils around their undaunted Bishop.[31]

On the anniversary of the festival that had witnessed the assault upon him, the year before, Ambrose, now as then beleaguered by the imperial soldiers, ascended his pulpit to encourage his people. "I see," he commences, "that ye are unwontedly disturbed, and on my account. Why this should be, I know not, unless perchance you have seen or heard me directed by the sovereigns to go hence whithersoever I pleased, while all desiring to follow me have

[30] 386. Cod. Theod., lib. xvi. tit. i. 4.

[31] Ambros., Ep. 21.

been permitted to do so. And did ye fear, then, that I should abandon the Church, and leave you because I feared for my own safety? Then might ye have remembered what I have declared, that the thought of deserting the Church can never enter into my mind. For I fear the Lord of the Universe more than the Emperor of these realms. . . . . We render," he continues, "to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. Cæsar's is the tribute-money, that is not denied. But God's is the Church, so much so, that it cannot be made subject to Cæsar. . . . . And what," concludes the unchanging prelate, "can be more honorable to the Emperor than that he should be called the son of the Church? . . . . For within, not above the Church is the Emperor." [32]

Both the Emperor, however, and the Empress Justina proved more determined than on the preceding year. Bold discourses from the pulpit and still bolder replies to the messengers from court proved inadequate to avert the present demands against Ambrose. Changing his course by a single master-stroke, he found himself once more on the road to victory.

The history of liberty is not the history of credulity. Otherwise our pages would have teemed with the superstitions which hung over the Early Christians as with perpetually dropping clouds. From the time of sowing the seed, its growth had been attended with phenomena, the most startling of which were generally the most readily believed. What

[32] Ep. 21.

might be the result of believing them depended on the position of the observer. The simple worshipper considered these marvels to be displayed to others as well as to him. The lonely devotee regarded them as indications of peculiar regard towards himself. The humble penitent bowed before them as tokens of returning grace. The imperious prelate pointed to them as the proofs of his increasing majesty.

Since the intervention of the sovereigns in the controversies of their Christian subjects, the number of supernatural appearances had singularly increased. Miracles were indiscriminately sought to heighten such devotion as that of Constantine or to check such hostility as that of Julian. Though sometimes invented by their witnesses or reporters, they were credited by these almost as devoutly as by those to whom they were narrated. Indeed the excitement in which most of the Christian leaders spent their lives rendered them peculiarly sensitive to every occurrence that seemed or was at all extraordinary. So earnest were they to see their side supported by the saints, if not by the Deity in Heaven, that they accepted signs and wonders with unhesitating confidence. The more opportune the manifestation of favor towards them, the more implicitly was it believed.

Thus much is necessary to preface an account of the prodigies behind which the Milanese Bishop now entrenched himself. The church edifice long claimed by his adversaries had been but recently completed. It was not yet dedicated. All the late events contributed to render Ambrose desirous of conducting

the ceremony of dedication with the utmost possible solemnity. Wishing, as he himself relates, for some relics to deposit in the church on the day of consecration, he ordered his clergy to dig amongst the sepulchres of certain saints entombed near his own basilica. "We found," says the Bishop, "two men of great stature, such as the olden times produced. The bones were all entire, and there was a great quantity of blood." These were the marks by means of which the bodies of martyrs were identified. "A great concourse of people," continues Ambrose, "flocked to the spot during the whole of that day and of the next. What need of telling more? We arrayed the relics in proper guise, and at night transported them to the basilica, where vigils were celebrated. Many possessed persons were cured by touching the sacred remains. The next day, we carried them to the church which was to be dedicated. On the way, a blind man was cured..... Such," cried the Bishop in the sermon of dedication, "such are the defenders whom I desire. Such are my soldiers!"[33]

Augustine, then at Milan, confirms the account of Ambrose. "Then," he writes, "didst Thou by a vision discover to Thy Bishop where the bodies of Gervasius and Protasius the martyrs lay hid, ... whence Thou might seasonably produce them to repress the fury of a woman, but an Empress..... Thence the fame spread, thence Thy praises glowed

[33] Still in 386. Ambrose sent portions of the relics, especially of the blood covering them, to many of his contemporaries, East and West. Ep. 22. See Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. II. p. 84.

and shone. Thence the mind of that enemy, though not turned to the soundness of believing, was yet turned back from the fury of persecuting."[34] In vain would Justina or her son have assaulted Ambrose, as he stood beside the tomb in which he had laid his martyrs' bones. He had carried his cause, and this time decisively, against his sovereigns.

It was not long before they found the advantage of being at peace with the intrepid prelate. As readily as he had withstood their power, did he consent to withstand the power of their colleague Maximus, whose purpose of invading Italy was distinctly apparent. To obtain peace, Ambrose consented to repair for the second time to the court of Maximus. "I came to thee before," said the Bishop, "seeking peace for an inferior. I come now to demand it for an equal." "And by whose aid hath he become an equal?" rejoined the Emperor. "By that of the Omnipotent God," answered Ambrose, "who hath preserved to Valentinian the power which He gave him." Maximus then reproached the Bishop for having opposed his previous plans of invasion. "And how," exclaimed Ambrose, "did I hinder the march of your legions? with what barriers? with what lines? with what numbers? Did I close the Alps against thee with my body? Would that I had! I should have no fear of thy displeasure or of thy recrimination!" The Emperor promised to take the Bishop's demands into consideration.

[34] Confess., IX. 7. "Denique," says the biographer Paulinus, "ex hoc tempore sedari cœpit persecutio quæ Justinæ furore accendebatur." Vit. Ambros., 15.

But making it a condition, as it seems, that Ambrose should communicate with the Catholics by whom Priscillian and his adherents had been slain, the generous prelate rejected the proffered terms. He returned to Milan, warning Valentinian against "a man who concealed his projects of war under the veil of peace."[35] Valentinian instantly despatched another envoy who, instead of profiting by the example and the counsel of Ambrose, suffered himself and his master to be completely deluded by the artifices of Maximus.

His sudden descent upon Italy drove Valentinian and his household to seek protection at the court of Theodosius. By him the invader was defeated, while Valentinian, after some delay, was restored to his sovereignty. But he as well as his subjects were virtually beneath the sway of Theodosius, who paraded himself as a conqueror throughout Italy.[36]

Only at one point were his claims resisted. On his arrival at Milan, Ambrose appears to have been absent. But an edict issued by the Emperor concerning a Bishop of a diocese as remote as the Euphrates, brought Ambrose into direct encounter with a more powerful sovereign than any whom he had before opposed. It seems that the Christian inhabitants of Callinicum, a town to the east of Antioch, had burned a synagogue belonging to their Jewish townsmen. Not content with this, some monks of the same place, provoked by the gibes of

[35] In 387. Ambros., Ep. 24. [36] 387, 388. Zos., IV. 42 *et seq.*

certain Heretics, destroyed a church in which their opponents were wont to worship. The displeasure excited by these proceedings in the mind of Theodosius appears to have driven out all recollection of his own repeated declarations against the Heretic and the unbeliever. He ordered the Bishop of Callinicum, to whose instigation the outrages were ascribed, to rebuild the synagogue at his own expense. As for the incendiary monks, they were ordered to stand their trial under the threat of the severest penalties in case they should be proved guilty.[37] Nothing, apparently, could be more just than these commands. But their execution would overturn the whole system by which Theodosius had exalted the Catholic faith to its supremacy. Ambrose of Milan understood as much. Without waiting the supplications of the Christians at Callinicum, without delaying his own representations until his return to Milan, the Bishop addressed a letter to the Emperor.

"It neither becomes a sovereign," he says, "to deny the liberty of speech, nor does it become a priest to withhold from saying what he thinks.... .. What I do is done, firstly, in love of you, and in the desire of securing your safety. Or if this is discredited or interdicted, then I speak from fear of offending the Divinity." Undoubtedly Ambrose was sincere. His argument demonstrates the necessity of serving God as well as of saving the Emperor by upholding the Catholic supremacy.

[37] 388. Ambros., Ep. 40, 41. Paulin., Vit. Ambros., 22.

"And what," exclaims the ardent prelate, "what will Christ say to you hereafter? . . . . . I have turned thee, He will say, from a subject into an Emperor. . . . . I have enabled thee to triumph over thy foe, and now, thou art suffering mine enemies to triumph over my people!" For the Bishop of Callinicum, it is simply urged that the imperial commands will render him "either a prevaricator or a martyr."[38]

The letter was disregarded. But the Emperor's neglect did not induce indifference or submission on the part of the Bishop. He had closed his despatch by insinuating that his remonstrances would be repeated, if necessary, in the open church. This insinuation was carried into literal effect. The first meeting, as it appears, between Ambrose and Theodosius after the return of the former to Milan, took place in the church where the Bishop was conducting public service. A discourse followed the lessons of the day, drawing from these all the instances that could bear upon the point at issue. "To thee," concluded the preacher, "to thee, O Emperor, I direct my words. And as thou knowest how indispensable is the Lord's blessing, so do thou render service to thy Helper in proportion to the glory which thou hast received. . . . . And as all are members of His body, that is, of His Church, ... so do thou protect them all, that He also may protect thy authority with His celestial power." As the Bishop descended from the

[38] All from Ep. 40.

pulpit, the Emperor spoke out, "Thou hast been preaching about us." "I have been preaching," replied the Bishop, "what pertaineth to your good." Theodosius then added in a deprecatory tone that he had recalled his decree against the Bishop of Callinicum, but that the monks could not be so easily forgiven for their misdeeds. At this, one of the imperial officers began to upbraid the monks, as if he thought the Emperor needed to be sustained against the commanding prelate. The interlocutor was silenced by Ambrose, who demanded the immediate pardon of the Catholics at Callinicum. Theodosius hesitated. But Ambrose saw his advantage, and insisted that he could not continue his service unless his demands were fully granted. At length the Emperor yielded.[39]

In the next year but one, Theodosius was again at Milan. He was, for the moment, however, absent from that city, when tidings came that the military governor of the Illyrian province had been murdered by some rioters of Thessalonica for refusing to liberate their favorite charioteer from a well-merited imprisonment. The intelligence of the sedition was soon followed by that of the punishment concerning which Theodosius had sent his orders from Milan. Seven thousand persons, without regard to age, or sex, or any evidences of innocence, had been slaughtered at Thessalonica by the imperial commands.[40]

[39] "Omnia itaque ex sententia gesta sunt," concludes Ambrose exultingly. Ep. 41. Paulin., Vit. Ambros., 23.

[40] 390. Theod., v. 17. Soz., VII. 25. Paulin., Vit. Ambros., 24.

It did not lay with the Bishop of Milan to oppose the suppression of a distant disturbance. The only precedent for his interference in such a case was that created by his own conduct in relation to the Catholics at Callinicum. Nor could this require him to interpose in behalf of the Thessalonicans, who had been punished not as zealous Catholics, but as seditious subjects. Yet after having denounced the course of the Emperor in relation to the offenders of Callinicum, Ambrose could hardly do less than resist the cruelty by which Thessalonica was desolated. There was, besides, a peculiar sense of mortification on the part of the prelate, that he who was especially the Catholic sovereign, should have allowed himself to perpetrate so unheard-of barbarities.[41]

Thus moved, Ambrose could not keep his peace. Yet how to accost the Emperor as the crisis demanded, was not to be determined without perplexity. To go to him with reproaches was too feeble a step to secure any amends for what had passed. But to take a bolder one must have seemed hazardous. Nor did it appear merely perilous, but hopeless to attempt the transformation of a vindictive sovereign into a submissive penitent.

The Bishop withdrew from the city as the Emperor returned after his brief absence. To write to Theodosius was the most that Ambrose, with all his courage, appears to have ventured. Even then, he wrote with his own hand, that what he

[41] "Quod nulla memoria habet." Ambros., Ep. 51.

had written might be read by Theodosius alone.[42] "When this was first reported," he says, "this that took place at Thessalonica, one of our synods was in session. Not a Bishop was there but grieved, not one that listened with indifference. Nor was there any forgiveness for thy deed hinted at amongst any of our communion. . . . . Thus have I written, not to put thee to confusion, but that what I have brought forward may urge thee to wipe away this stain upon thy authority. . . . . But the stain of sin can never be removed except by tears and repentance. . . . . I advise, I entreat, I exhort and I admonish thee. . . . . If thou believest me," concludes the Bishop, "comply with me; if thou believest, understand what I say. If thou dost not believe me, pardon what I do in preferring God to thee."[43]

The letter was soon followed by Ambrose himself. Upon his arrival, Theodosius appears to have proceeded to the church, to ask either explanation or forgiveness. He was met by the Bishop at the portals. Thus spoke the prelate: — "The power which thou wieldest perchance preventeth thee from comprehending thy transgression . . . . . But thou art a mortal, O Emperor, nay, thou art a subject, like those whom thou rulest. For there is one Lord and Emperor of all men, the Creator of the universe. With what eyes, then, wilt thou behold the temple of our Common Lord? With what feet wilt thou tread this consecrated ground? How wilt thou raise

[42] "Scribo manu mea quod solus legas." Ep. 51.

[43] Ep. 51.

thy hands, dripping with the blood of thine unrighteous massacre? . . . . Depart therefore and do not attempt to add new transgressions to the crime already committed by thee!" Priests and people stood wondering alike to see the Emperor withdraw from the church silently and in tears.[44]

Eight months of public penitence had intervened when Theodosius repaired to the same church on Christmas morning. But the period appointed for his penance was not fully expired; and to have admitted him without opposition would have undone all that had been done. Ambrose again stood at the portal. "Thou comest like a tyrant," exclaimed the prelate, "trampling upon the laws of God." "Not so," replied the humbled Emperor, "I offer no resistance to the appointed laws, nor do I desire unlawfully to enter this sacred vestibule. But I ask thee to free me from my bonds, and to open to me the door which the Lord hath opened to all penitents." "Then promise me," added the Bishop after some further parley, "promise me a law which shall defer every sentence of bloodshed or of proscription for thirty days." The Emperor turned to some of his attendants, and having dictated to them the required edict, he signed it before the Bishop's eyes.[45] The Bishop then pronounced him to be absolved. Crawling upon his hands and knees, tearing his hair, and watering the pavement with his tears, the Emperor followed the Bishop into the sanctuary.[46]

[44] Theod., v. 18.

[45] A law to this effect, but of eight years earlier date, is in the Cod. Theod., lib. IX. tit. XL. 13.

[46] "Stravit omne quo utebatur insigne regium." Ambros., De Obit. Theod., 34. So Soz., VII. 25.

"With the same tears," says the historian, he rose at the proper time to bring his gifts to the altar. Having made his offerings, he took his place as he had been accustomed, within the chancel. "Then again," continues the marvelling narrator, "the great Ambrose broke silence, ... and asked him if he wished anything." The Emperor replied that he awaited the communication of the Divine mysteries. But being informed by the Archdeacon that the Bishop allowed only the clergy to occupy the chancel, the Emperor retired after desiring the Archdeacon to acquaint the Bishop that he had not assumed a place within the chancel through any arrogance, but because it had been his wont to stand there in other days.[47] The submission of the sovereign to the prelate could not be more complete. "And wisely minded was Theodosius," says an African Bishop, a century and a half afterwards, "wisely minded in subjecting himself to the priests of God!"[48]

The exaltation of the priesthood was confirmed by the laws of the sovereigns. None but priests were to sit in judgment upon priests whenever the cases that came up for trial could in any way be termed ecclesiastical. Even criminal prosecutions might be conducted before the clerical tribunals.[49] The single

[47] Theod., v. 18, where is also related the contrast which Theodosius drew between the Bishop of Milan and his colleague of Constantinople.

[48] "Pie admodum credens et sapienter intelligens, quod non ex temporali potestate qua fuerat etiam sacerdotibus Dei præpositus, sed ex eo pervenire posset ad vitam, quod illis erat subjectus." Facundus, Pro Defens. Trium Capit., XII. 5.

[49] Ambrose (Ep. 21) mentions the law of Valentinian the elder, "hoc est, sacerdotes de sacerdoti-

exception, reserving capital trials for the cognizance of the imperial authorities, seems to have been made as much to spare the priesthood from pronouncing sentences of death, as to prevent the capital offences of their body from escaping punishment. In all other cases, the priest was declared amenable to his fellow-priests alone.[50]

A new revolution broke out in the West. Valentinian, long under the control of his general Arbogastes the Frank,[51] was finally slain by him. Against him, and the rhetorician Eugenius whom he proclaimed Emperor, Theodosius was obliged to don his arms once more.[52] The narrative of the contest abounds with proofs of the influences to which the Catholic Emperor had become sensitive. A consultation with an Egyptian hermit precedes the campaign.[53] Visions of saints hover over the sovereign on the eve of his battles.[54] When victory is won, he marches towards Rome,[55] to urge the Senate to embrace the faith which had again crowned his actions with success.

Ambrose, who had withdrawn from Milan during the occupation of the city by Arbogastes and Eu-

bus voluit judicare." A law of Gratian to the same effect is in Cod. Theod., lib. XVI. tit. II. 23.

[50] So the Council of Carthage (in 397) pronounces the severest penalties on all "Bishops, Presbyters, Deacons and Clergymen," who submit to the civil rather than to the ecclesiastical tribunal. Can. 9. Conc., tom. II. p. 1401.

[51] "Pæne infra privati modum redacto." Sulpicius Alexander, ap. Greg. Tur., II. 9.

[52] 392. Zos., IV. 53–58.

[53] Soz., VII. 22.

[54] St. John and St. Philip. Theod., V. 24.

[55] Now 394. Zos., IV. 59; V. 38. The point whether he reached Rome or met a deputation from the senate at Milan, is of no importance. See Beugnot, Destr. du Pagan., tom. I. pp. 483 *et seq.*

genius, received the news of their defeat from Theodosius himself.[56] The Bishop hastened to Aquileia to meet the victorious Emperor, who threw himself at the feet of the prelate, declaring that he owed his preservation to the virtues and the prayers of Ambrose.[57] The two returned to Milan. Theodosius for some time abstained from participating in the communion, "on account," says the Bishop, under whose direction the Emperor was probably acting, "of his having caused the death of his enemies."[58] A few months only of life remained to Theodosius. "I loved him," says Ambrose to whom he commended his children,[59] "and he addressed me with his last breath. I loved him, and when the spirit was leaving the body, he was more anxious about the state of the Church than about his own perils."[60]

Two weak-brained sons, Arcadius and Honorius, both almost from infancy declared their father's colleagues, succeeded under the direction of two hot-brained ministers, Rufinus and Stilicho. Arcadius, that is, Rufinus, governed the East, while Honorius, that is, Stilicho, governed the West. Theodosius was the last of the Roman Emperors who ruled alone. The alternate seasons of dividing and of re-uniting the imperial centralization ended in deciding its division beyond the possibility of re-union. Divisions of a more formidable nature were already decided. The panegyrist of Theodosius could ad-

[56] Ambros., Ep. 61.
[57] Paulin., Vit. Ambros., 31.
[58] "Quia hostes in acie prostrati sunt." De Obit. Theod., 34.
[59] Paulin., Vit. Ambros., 32.
[60] De Obit. Theod., 35. Theodosius died in the beginning of 395.

dress him in words "as from the Empire" deploring the loss of Pannonia, the devastation of Illyria, and the expected ruin of Gaul.[61]

Ambrose of Milan lived to stand on the threshold of this darkening period. Not long after his great triumph over his sovereign, he received a visit from two Persians, described as "most powerful and most wise," who came to discuss the absorbing questions of the times with the renowned prelate.[62] But a little while before his death, an embassy arrived at Milan from Fritigil, "a certain queen of the Marcomanni," who sent to beg the Bishop's instructions "how she ought to believe in Christ." Amongst the directions which he returned, was one that Fritigil should persuade her husband to preserve peace with the Romans. The amazed biographer relates that the king was induced to declare himself the vassal of the Emperor.[63]

Were such the influence of Ambrose, Stilicho, the minister, might well exclaim on hearing of the Bishop's illness, that, if he died, destruction threatened Italy.[64] "I have not so lived amongst you," said Ambrose himself to a deputation from the court, entreating him to pray for the continuance of his life, "as to be ashamed of living longer. Yet I have no fear of death," he added, "for ours is a merciful Lord." Soon after, on the day before Eas-

[61] "Nescis me tibi tuisque decrescere? Quidquid atterit Gothus, quidquid rapit Hunnus, quidquid aufert Alanus, id olim desiderabit Arcadius. Perdidi infortunata Pannonias; lugeo funus Illyrici, specto excidium Galliarum." Pan. Vet., Lat. Pacatus, XII. 11.

[62] Paulin., Vit. Ambros., 25.

[63] Id., ib., 35.

[64] Id., ib., 45.

ter, he expired, not yet arrived at the age of threescore.[65] He had held the episcopate during a third part of his life.

Ambrose stands as the leader and the victor in the contest of the prelate with the sovereign. He left the sovereign subdued, the prelate exalted. The place of the courtiers and the soldiers in the Heathen period of the Empire was taken by prelates in its Christian period.

The age of prelates, as it may be styled, had been advancing from the time when the age of martyrs had ended. It had now reached its full. Its liberty was established. The union which that liberty could prepare might be foreseen. And what was this union? It was the union of the few who held power to the many who obeyed it. And what the liberty by which this union was prepared? It was the liberty of the prelate, in other words, of the ruler. It was the same sort of liberty that had been possessed by the Heathen.

Where, then, was the liberty that had been bestowed upon the Christian? Where the liberty of the subject? Had the subject classes been elevated by the rise of their prelates? It was scarcely possible. The chief point with the prelate was to establish his authority, or that, in a more generous view, of his Church. To build up dominion was not to extend freedom. An age of prelates could not but be unpropitious to the liberty of the subject.

[65] 397. Paulin., Vit. Ambros., 48.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE STRUGGLING CLASSES.

"To be thus is nothing,
But to be safely thus." *Macbeth.*

It is difficult to find signs of liberty amongst the masses. No sooner do any appear, than they disappear amongst the more prevailing signs of oppression. Yet there are some to be found, and at the present period.

But to seek them successfully, we must concentrate our attention upon a single portion of the masses. To go to the Heathen would be in vain. They lay prostrate and still. The Christians alone were struggling to rise. With them, as the struggling classes, there will be discovered some indications of liberty.

The great majority of the Christians, as of the Heathen, consisted of the poor. Ever fewer were the hands in which fortune or even competence was now held. Ever fewer likewise were the means by which one might attain to even moderate possessions. At the same time the sufferings of the poor were greatly augmented. Except in the cities, where they could gain some sort of subsistence from the

largesses of their superiors, the poor, that is, the free poor, were in want of all the necessaries of existence. Would the Christians in such a position prove their liberty ?

It depended upon what was understood to be their liberty. If it was interpreted as the ability to rescue themselves from poverty, then it was seldom proved. But it was proved every day, if it was regarded as the ability to bear with poverty. This came from the faith in which they believed. Taught that they were no longer despicable in the eyes either of God or of man, the Christian poor obtained strength to wrestle with their privations.[1] Their struggles, unlike those of the Heathen, did not die out in indolence or despair. They might not be free to rescue themselves from want. But they were free to contend with it as none of the poor in former ages had been.

The same holds true of the Christian laborer. The religion which he embraced advanced his position. "Suppose two cities," exclaims the great preacher of the times, "one of the rich, the other of the poor. . . . . Which will be better able to take care of itself ? In the city of the rich, there will be no artisan, no builder, no architect, no cobbler, no baker, no husbandman, no smith, no ropemaker. . . . . How then will the city stand ? . . . . By buying ? Then it will not suffice to itself." The city of the poor, that is, of the laborers, is then pronounced the superior.[2]

[1] "Et quis fecit illos ambos ?" asks Augustine in relation to the rich and the poor. "Dominus," he answers. "Divitem unde pauperem adjuvaret ; pauperem, unde divitem probaret." Serm. 39.

[2] Chrysost., in Ep. I. ad Cor., Hom. 34.

As soon as the laborer could be viewed by himself and by others in a light like this, his ability to labor was increased. He did not need to be delivered from toil. He had obtained the strength to labor without being miserable. To feel that he was toiling honorably was an incentive that no laborer had known in ancient times.

It was not now that these more generous sentiments with regard to the lower classes had appeared. The laws of Church and of State mentioned in previous pages bear witness to repeated acknowledgments of the honor belonging to the inferior orders. But at the period of which we read, the numbers of the Christians in the lower walks of life had so much increased as to bring out the rights or the liberties amongst them in bolder relief.

The condition of public affairs was such as to strengthen the consideration for the laboring classes. No longer could the treasury be filled by despoiling the foe. No longer could it be replenished by plundering the subject. It was from the latter alone that the imperial revenues were to be derived. Yet unless he was encouraged to labor as well as obliged to contribute, his resources would soon be exhausted. Hence came the rewards proposed for individual toil. Hence came the honors promised in return for the service of the corporation. In the same view, the able-bodied mendicant was expelled from Rome.[3] In the same view, the beggar who could labor for

[3] Cod. Theod., lib. xiv. tit. xviii. ed. Gothofred.

himself was doomed to servitude for life.[4] Without labor amongst its subjects, the Empire would have ceased to be.[5]

This acted upon the Heathen as upon the Christian. But with a great difference. The Heathen regarded the obligation to toil as a base one. The Christian considered it a noble one. Only, therefore, amongst the Christian laborers of the Empire, would there be proofs of the liberty that springs from labor.

Another point is to be remarked in connection with the imperial exigencies. It is that a large number of the occupations formerly imposed upon slaves alone were now open to the so-called freemen. Whether the freemen entered upon those pursuits voluntarily or involuntarily, is another question. The fact that they were called to new fields of labor indicates the importance which labor was assuming.

It indicates something else. This is the reduction of the servile class in numbers.[6] Had not the slaves been greatly diminished within the imperial realms, so general a call upon free laborers would not have been made. But how happened it that the number of slaves had been reduced? It was partly in consequence of the smaller supply of captives from war. It was partly because there were fewer proprietors to own or to employ bondmen. The slaves may have been also lessened by emancipation. The

[4] "Colonatu perpetuo fulciatur." Cod. Just., lib. XI. tit. XXV., or Cod. Theod., lib. XIV. tit. XVIII.

[5] "Le budget de la République reposait sur les produits de la guerre; celui de l'Empire sur le produit du travail et de l'impôt. L'Empire ne pouvait donc vivre sans travail." Moreau-Christophe, Du Droit à l'Oisiveté, p. 266.

[6] Wallon, Hist. de l'Escl. dans l'Ant., tom. III. pp. 112 *et seq.*

Christian masters perhaps had been liberating their slaves.

Christianity, however, had not promised freedom from servitude any more than from toil or from penury. To all the struggling classes it but assured the power to bear with their lot in fortitude. What it thus did for others, it did for the slave. It may have done more for him than for the rest. Of all the struggling classes, his was in the greatest need of succor. "The law," quoth the preacher, "which is from our Universal Lord, knows no difference of persons."[7] "Nor does the Church," he adds, "recognize any distinction between master and slave."[8] "Let no Christian then," exclaims the contemporary writer, "let no one hold a slave as he would a horse or a sum of money. . . . . For man ought to love man as himself."[9] "Nor ought one master," rejoins the other, "to have more than one slave. Rather ought two or three to have but one."[10]

A kindred spirit breathed in the instructions to the rich man. "Usurers," says Augustine, "dare to say that they have no other way but usury of making their gains. Just as well might the robber and the burglar, the pander and the criminal say the same thing."[11] The obligation of the capitalist to

[7] Chrysost., In Ep. ad Eph., Hom. xxii. 2.

[8] *Καὶ γὰρ ἡ Ἐκκλησία οὐκ οἶδε δεσπότου, οὐκ οἶδεν οἰκέτου διαφοράν. Ἀπὸ κατορθωμάτων καὶ ἁμαρτημάτων τοῦτον κἀκεῖνον ὁρίζει.* Id., In Ep. ad Phil., Hom. i. 1.

[9] August., De Serm. Dom. in Mont., i. 59.

[10] Chrysost., In Ep. i. ad Cor., Hom. xl. 5.

[11] "Hoc mihi et latro diceret . . . . et effractor . . . . et leno . . . . et maleficus." En. in Psal. cxxviii. 6. Ambrose (De Tobia, capp. iii. *et seq.*) is equally earnest against usury.

deal justly with the laborer, of the rich to deal charitably with the poor, stood on the same level with the duty of the master to the slave. At once the poor man and the laborer were elevated. Not that their lot was generally ameliorated, but that here and there, in a few communities, individual members of the classes hitherto the most degraded received unwonted consideration from their superiors. Some of the highest in rank at Rome opened a hospital for the relief of the suffering.[12] Contrast this with the largesses of the Heathen lords, and the opening prospects of the lower orders will be perceived.

But the struggling classes did not consist merely of the needy or of the enslaved. Physical trials did not excite so remarkable resistance as the intellectual, above all, the spiritual trials of the time. Servitude to old errors and to old passions was far more terrible to many than that to any masters in the form of men. The labor on which the spirit or the mind was intent outweighed all the toils in which the arm could be employed. The want of sustenance to the soul enfeebled by the privations of year after year, age after age, was a thousandfold more pressing to a large number than any want of nourishment for the body. To classify those who struggled through these emergencies would be useless. A few instances will show who they were.

The struggles of the Christian began before actual conversion. If any living being appeared to be destined to a Christian career, it was Augustine, the

[12] This was the work of Fabiola and Pammachus. Hier., Ep. 84.

son of Monica. Yet all the tenderness of her love, all the solemnity of her faith was inadequate to save her boy from growing up to be her shame. His heart was clouded. His intellect was convulsed with wild conceptions. His body was given up to destructive lusts. Wandering from place to place, sometimes too passionate, sometimes too miserable to repose, Augustine suffered as much as it was possible to suffer from the miseries and the passions of an unsettled conscience. "I sought," he says, "for pleasures, sublimities, truths, not in Him that made me, but in His creatures, myself and others. So I fell headlong into sorrows, confusions and errors. . . . . And I strayed farther from Thee, and Thou didst leave me to myself, and I was tossed about, wasted and dissipated. . . . . And I wandered farther still and farther from Thee into more and more fruitless plots of troubles, with wilful depression and restless lassitude."[13]

Choosing the profession of a teacher at the same time that he was proving his incapacity to be taught, Augustine began his calling at his native place, Tagaste. Thence he removed to Carthage, and thence, again, to Rome. His trials reached their crisis at Milan, whither he was followed by Monica, who had wept unceasingly over the errors of her wayward son. A Bishop whom she once entreated to reclaim Augustine, had comforted her by saying that "the child of her tears could never perish."[14] It was at Milan that the prophecy began to be fulfilled.

[13] Confess., I. 18; II. 2. [14] Ib., III. 12.

Her son was touched; but by words that seemed to have overthrown the few supports on which he had leaned in his days of mysticism or scepticism. Monica heard the story of his doubts, to which she had but one confiding answer, that "she trusted in Christ to see her son a Catholic believer before she died."[15] Augustine took strange means to clear his way. Books of Heathen philosophy were used as earnestly as the Christian Scriptures. Traditions and individual experiences were all pressed into the labor. After pains and fears of which this brief account will convey but a faint idea, Augustine was baptized by Ambrose of Milan.[16]

Monica, as if she had survived only to see her son consecrated to the service in which she had lived, died shortly afterwards. "I closed her eyes," writes Augustine, "and a great sorrow entered into my heart, overflowing in tears..... I rejoiced in what she said, when in her last illness she called me dutiful, and observed with great affection that she had never received a harsh or reproachful word from me. Yet, O my God, who madest me, what comparison is there between the honor which I paid to her and her slavery for me?"[17] The loss of the mother confirmed the resolution of the son. Augustine returned to Tagaste, and after various labors in the Catholic cause, was raised to the bishopric of Hippo, on the Numidian coast, the year when Theodosius died.[18]

[15] Confess., IV. 1.

[16] In 387. "Per illius os potentissimum me Dominus ab errore liberavit, et per illius ministerium gratiam mihi baptismi salutaris indulsit." Ep. 147.

[17] Confess., IX. 12.

[18] 395. At first as a colleague. Possid., Vit. August., 8.

Few young men but were exposed to the same disorders through which Augustine had passed. He describes the students of Carthage as living in "a most disgraceful and unruly license." "Divers outrages," he declares, "they commit, punishable by law, did not custom uphold them."[19] An imperial edict of earlier date prescribes the rules under which the students at Rome and at Constantinople were to pursue their labors. "They must conduct themselves at all their meetings as they ought to do. . . . . They must consider that evil reputation and communication are to be avoided as in near proximity to crimes. Nor are they to attend the theatres too frequently, or seek unseasonable convivialities. Moreover, we do enjoin that any one of this number who shall not demean himself in the capital as the dignity of liberal pursuits demands, shall be publicly scourged and transported to his home."[20] Commands like these suggest the struggles through which a way was pierced to the services and the anxieties of manhood.

Amongst the earliest pupils of Augustine, was his young townsman Licentius. After intercourse so close that the youth followed his teacher from Tagaste to Carthage and even to Italy, the two were separated. All the greater was the solicitude of Augustine for the welfare of Licentius. "I fear," he writes, "that you are very firmly and very dangerously bound by mortal interests. Yet you have received golden endowments from God."[21] The young

[19] Confess., v. 8.
[20] Cod. Theod., lib. XIV. tit. IX. 1.
[21] Ep. 26. So in Ep. 27.

man, rich in fortune and high in rank, appears to have been soon launched upon a sea of tumultuous indulgences and ambitions. He dreamed, it seems, of becoming Consul and Pontifex. "Thou wilt be really Pontifex," writes one of Augustine's colleagues to the dreamer, "and really Consul, if thou wilt but adhere to the prophetic steps and apostolic discipline of Augustine."[22] The decision of Licentius is not related.

Such teachers as Augustine were rare. The preceptor chosen for the young prince Gratian, and afterwards rewarded by his imperial pupil with the highest honors,[23] was Ausonius, a rhetorician of Bordeaux. With the exception of good humor, Ausonius seems to have had no qualification to become a suitable instructor either to a prince or to a peasant. Yet he declares, "I have not been without my experience. I have been the teacher of many minds. . . . . I have by indulgent warning induced the young to seek, even through toil, the pleasant places where they can gather the sweet fruit springing from the bitter root. . . . . And I have led others on to arts and to eloquence, although they would refuse restraint nor yield their mouths to the biting curb."[24] Such a teacher might seem to escape the struggles of his times. But they rose around, nay, within him. With all his seductiveness, he could not teach, with all his suppleness, he could not acquire

[22] Paulin. Nol., ap Aug., Ep. 32. The letter closes in rhythm: —

"Vive, precor, sed vive Deo; nam vivere mundo
Mortis opus; vivere est vivere vita Deo."

[23] Auson., Præf. II., Edyll. IV.

[24] Edyll. IV.

devotion. "I cannot deny," he says, "that piety bears the yoke unwillingly, whilst it prefers the pleasures of life to the truth."[25] Nor with all his courtliness, could Ausonius escape the embarrassments in which he was placed as a man of the world. "Augustus ordereth me," he wrote, "to sing. I have no power. But Cæsar hath ordered. I will have the power. How shall I say that I cannot do what he thinks I can?"[26] According to a description which the poet by command has left concerning the daily occupations of his generation, the morning was to begin with prayer. But the poem breaks off with the festivities to which every one who could devoted himself.[27] One who walks amongst the shadows of the indifference and the lust visible in the writings of Ausonius will not wonder that he has often been regarded as no Christian, but a Heathen.

All the more distinctly does he serve as a specimen of the many teachers and the many learners who could do little or nothing to rescue their generation from its increasing perplexities. A more self-sacrificing nature than his, a more self-controlling one than Augustine's was needed to take the van of the hosts who struggled on. Yet where was such an one to be found? The Church had its prelates. The court had its favorites. But the imperial officials had other interests than those of the struggling classes. The Catholic champions, though professedly the leaders of these classes, were actually

[25] "Nec possum reticere, jugum quod libere nunquam
Fert pietas, nec amat blandis postponere verum." Ep. 24.

[26] Præfat. 1.

[27] See the Ephemeris.

their rulers, nay, frequently their oppressors. Had not Aërius and Jovinian been exiled? Had not Priscillian been executed? And the Heretic in his travail, the Heathen in his agony, where were they led but to the dungeon and the stake?

Such of the Catholic leaders who did not enter into these oppressions were themselves oppressed. Not, perhaps, by any outward forms of oppression; but by their own uncertainties and irregularities. How these would blend with the devotion of many a leader as of many a follower amongst the Catholics, may be gathered from the career of Martin of Tours.

Born in Pannonia, but educated in Italy, Martin enrolled himself amongst the members of the Church at Pavia, against the will of his parents, who were Heathen. He was then only ten years old. Two years afterwards, the boy dreamed of imitating the Christian anchorites of the period in seeking an atmosphere more propitious to his faith than that which he breathed in his Heathen home. His father, a military tribune in the imperial army, put a stop to his fancies by obliging him to enlist, at the age of fifteen, in a troop of cavalry, with which he was sent to distant quarters in Gaul. There, however, being baptized, he soon afterwards obtained his discharge from the service into which he had been forced. Warm in affection, the young man set out after some delay, to visit his parents in Pannonia, with the hope of converting them to Christianity. He was disappointed; nor was his reception from the Arian Christians, then dominant in that province,

more encouraging. Scourged and driven from Pannonia, Martin sought refuge in a monastery at Milan. Thence, too, he was expelled by Arian influence. For the next five years, he found rest in an island on the Italian coast, which he left to reside at a monastery near Poitiers in Gaul.[28] This wandering was his only visible preparation for his elevation to a foremost place amongst his fellow-Catholics. It was much to his own disturbance that he was soon declared Bishop of Tours.[29]

He was then upwards of fifty-five. Yet the great labors of his life were but beginning. For more than a quarter of a century, Martin of Tours was unwearied in upholding the Catholic cause. But how was it done? By counsel to the ignorant? By care for the suffering? Not so much thus, as by fierce warfare with all, both low and high, opposing the Bishop's course. Whatever was the effect of these affrays upon others, upon Martin himself it tended to diminish rather than to increase the personal difficulties in which he had long been involved. Miracles were not wanting to command the obedience which his simpler exertions could not secure.[30] Yet the energies alone to be trusted in by a great leader failed the Bishop of Tours. The vision was seen. But the reality remained as full of varying confusions as ever. The Heathen temple fell. The Christian sanctuary rose. But the efficacy of a true faith was yet to be proved. The subject was upheld.

[28] Sulp. Sev., De Mart. Vit., 1 *et seq.* Soz., III. 14.

[29] 371 or 372. Sulp. Sev., as before, 7.

[30] Sulp. Sev., Dial. II., III.

The ruler was confronted.[31] But the workings of a true independence were yet to be fulfilled.[32]

"Not he alone who has no master," says the great prelate of the age, "is free. He, rather, is free who is free within himself, who is free by the laws of nature, and who knows that these laws are fulfilled by the manner not by the condition of existence. . . . . Therefore is the wise man free. For he who does what he would do is a freeman."[33] To this ideal liberty there may have been many to aspire. There were few by whom it was attained.

Feeble, indeed, were the signs of liberty amongst the masses, even the Christian masses of the Empire. The brighter omens with which our observation began yield to the darker auguries in which they close. Of the many composing the struggling classes there were few to save themselves in liberty.

[31] Sulp. Sev., De Mart. Vit., 10 *et seq.*

[32] Martin died in 397 or soon afterwards. Sulp. Sev., Ep. 3.

[33] "Sapiens ergo liber, quoniam qui ea facit quæ vult liber est." Ambros., Ep. 37, § 17, 19.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CATHOLIC CENTRALIZATION.

"Cristiani miseri, lassi,
Che . . . .
Fidanza avete ne' ritrosi passi." *Purgatorio.*

The ruling classes were not the same as they had been. At their head the Emperor wears his title. His courtiers and his soldiers preserve their names. But they are no longer the actual masters. Nor is he himself either the actual or the nominal sovereign. His power is shared with a colleague, sometimes with more than one, frequently with insurgents or with usurpers.

The places of those once ruling, though not actually vacant, were yet open to others. Who these others might be, had already appeared. They were the leaders of the Christians, rising, generation by generation, to higher influence, to higher dominion. The prelates of the Catholic Church became the virtual masters of the Catholic Empire.

Not yet had their power assumed a definite form. It had proved its superiority to the imperial sway. It had proved its supremacy over the individuals,

Catholic, Christian, Jew, or Heathen, by whom it had been directly or indirectly assailed. But the authority possessed by the Catholic prelates had not yet been organized. Its relations to its subjects could not be said to be defined until its relations amongst its possessors were more strictly determined.

This brought up an old question to be decided. Was there to be a Catholic centralization? In other words, were the prelates and the members of the Church to be united by a system which should exalt the few above the many? Not now for the first time was this asked. Years, ages before the present epoch, the basis of a Catholic centralization had been laid exactly where the ancient centralization had attained to its highest elevation. Age by age, year by year had lessened the resistance at first excited by the project. The feebler the imperial centralization, the stronger became the Catholic. At length, the Council at Constantinople appeared to decide the question by proclaiming the Roman to be the first, and the Constantinopolitan the second of all Catholic sees.

It still remained to be seen whether the proclamation would be sustained. Such a preëminence might be declared by council after council. Yet until the individual appeared to carry out the decrees of his colleagues declaring him their ruler, the supremacy of one prelate above another would not be definitely confirmed.

Such a man came forward at the moment and the place required. He was Siricius, by birth a Roman,[1]

[1] Anast., De Vit. Pont. Rom., 39.

and by the suffrages of his fellow-Catholics the Bishop of his native city.[2] Trained in all the associations of his great diocese, he assumed power at a time when the establishment of a central authority amongst the Catholics appeared more feasible than at any previous period. Of these circumstances, of the memories connected with his position, Siricius was eminently qualified, it would seem, to avail himself.

One of his first acts was to answer a letter addressed to his predecessor by the Bishop of Tarragona in Spain. On the points apparently referred by the Spaniard to the judgment of the Roman prelate, Siricius pronounces with unhesitating authority. "We have no right," he says, "to dissimulate or to keep silence, for a greater devotion than that of any others to the Christian faith is incumbent upon us. We bear the burdens of all who are heavy laden."[3] After laying down the law concerning the administration of ecclesiastical powers, the Roman Bishop goes on to direct his "dear brother" of Tarragona to spread his instructions not only through that diocese, but through all the Spanish provinces. "For it is permitted," declares Siricius, "to no priest of the Lord to live in ignorance concerning the statutes of the Apostolic See."[4]

Amongst the statutes thus authoritatively com-

[2] At the end of 384 or the beginning of 385. Soc., VII. 9.

[3] Siric., Ep. I., Ap. Conc., tom. II pp. 1212, 1213.

[4] "Statuta sedis Apostolicæ, vel canonum venerabilia definita nulli sacerdotum Domini ignorare sit liberum." Id., ib., p. 1218.

municated are some of peculiar bearing upon the system of Catholic centralization. The clergyman "marrying a widow or a second wife," is ordered to be "immediately deprived of all the honors of ecclesiastical station."[5] In the same spirit, the husband of a second wife or of a widow, "enrolled unworthily and incompetently in the sacred service," is directed to consider the privilege of retaining his priesthood without the hope of promotion, to be the utmost possible indulgence.[6] Farther still extended the crosier of the Roman prelate. Every "Bishop, Priest and Deacon, who shall not abstain from his wife," is ordered to "understand that all access to indulgence through us," perhaps referring to himself, perhaps to his colleagues generally, "is closed. . . . . For all of us," he declares, "are bound by an inviolable law that, from the day of our ordination, we must submit both our souls and bodies to sobriety and continence, in order that our daily offerings may in all respects be acceptable to our God."[7]

This was the seal upon the centralization of the Catholic Church. The object of compelling the clergy to celibacy was twofold. On the one hand, they would thus be enabled to rule their people more securely. Isolation led to superiority. On the other hand, they would be obliged to obey their own ruler

[5] Siric., Ep. I., Ap. Conc., tom. II. p. 1216.

[6] Id., ib., p. 1217.

[7] Id., ib., p. 1215. Among the responses accepting the decree of Siricius in his lifetime were those of the Conc. Carthag. III., c. 2, Ap. Conc., tom. II. p. 1241, Taurin., c. 8, p. 1386.

I do not venture to cite the document purporting to have been addressed by Siricius "dilectissimis fratribus et co-episcopis per Africam." It is too palpably interpolated or forged.

more entirely. Separation from their inferiors involved dependence on their superior. Forbidden to allow themselves the affections of men, the Catholic clergy were bound to all the sacrifices, they were raised to all the energies of priests, and of priests at whose head stood a master of more than imperial, of more than human claims to their submission.

With such an authority as this the Bishop of Rome might well confront the rulers of the Empire. Siricius turned from the Spanish priesthood to the Spanish sovereign, the Emperor Maximus. "We have received the letter of your Holiness," Maximus is represented as having replied. "And it was most welcome to us as well as most consistent with the priestly name and with the glory of your most illustrious city. In the Catholic faith concerning which you have addressed me, ... I confess that I take the greater interest, inasmuch as I have risen to the throne from that salutary source. As to Agricius, whom you declare to have improperly ascended to the priesthood, what greater proof of reverence for our Catholic faith can I give, than to leave the judgment of this man to the Catholic clergy?"[8] The Emperor of the Western provinces bent to the dictation of the Bishop of Rome. Nor was there any return of submission on the part of the Bishop towards the Emperor. The prelates, whom Maximus upheld in their murderous proceedings against Priscillian, were by Siricius unequivocally condemned.[9]

The manner in which Siricius announced "to the

[8] Ap. Conc., tom. II. p. 1227.

[9] Conc. Taurin., c. 6. Conc., tom. II. p. 1386.

Milanese Church," that Jovinian had been condemned at Rome, brings the authority of the Roman Bishop into contrast with that of his great contemporary Ambrose. "Other Heretics," writes the Roman, "have had their various opinions. But these, by opposing the continence commanded in the New Testament and in the Old, have already led many astray by their lustful and deceitful doctrines." It was against the cardinal point of the Roman system that Jovinian had protested in denying the virtue of celibacy. "Concerning this matter," continues Siricius to the Milanese, "it hath been necessary to acquaint you with our proceedings, most beloved brethren, in order that no priest through ignorance should defile himself by communion with these most abandoned men who would break into the Church under the name of religion."[10] In all that Siricius thus determines, Ambrose and his colleagues entirely acquiesce. "Marriage," they reply, "is good, in that it gives succession to our race. But celibacy is better, in that it secures an inheritance in the celestial kingdom and the succession of celestial virtues. . . . . Yet why dilate upon the question before our master and teacher? . . . . The men," conclude the Bishops, "whom your Holiness hath condemned, are condemned by us likewise according to your sentence."[11]

This was not the only instance in which Ambrose supported the authority of the Roman see. Not long after the condemnation of Jovinian, a council was con-

[10] Siric., Ep. II., Ap. Conc., tom. II. pp. 1218, 1219.

[11] Ambros., Ep. 42, or Ap. Conc., tom. II. pp. 1220 – 1222.

vened at Capua to decide upon various questions then agitating the Catholics and their Emperor Theodosius. Of these questions, the principal related to the schism in the Church of Antioch where the Bishop Flavian was still troubled by competitors. He had refused, however, to submit himself to the judgment of his Western colleagues, and they, as if impressed with his independence, had transferred the decision of his cause to the Bishop of Alexandria.[12] On Flavian's refusal of the Alexandrian as a judge, the latter wrote to Ambrose of Milan, informing him, perhaps as the leading member of the Capuan council, that the commission of the synod could not be executed.[13] Ambrose replied, encouraging his Alexandrian colleague to make another effort towards settling the dissensions at Antioch. If he should meet with no success, he is urged to some decisive steps in order to save "what had been built up," that is, at Capua, "from being overturned." "But it is our opinion," continues the Bishop of Milan, "that you must consult our brother, the head of the Roman Church. And we presume that you will take such measures as can by no possibility be displeasing to him. ..... Then we, also," he concludes, "learning that the Roman Church hath approved what hath been done, will gladly accept the result of your proceedings."[14]

Excited by the representations of the Roman Bishop and his supporters, the Emperor ordered Flavian to set sail for Rome. But Flavian, "with praise-

[12] 391. Ambros., Ep. 56.
[13] Id., ib.
[14] Ep. 56.

worthy courage," says the historian, withstood his sovereign as he had already withstood his colleagues. "If any accuse my faith of being unsound, O Emperor, or declare my life to be unworthy of the priesthood, I will accept my very accusers as my judges, and will submit to the sentence pronounced by them. But if they are disputing about the throne and the bishopric, I will neither plead nor contend against those desiring them. Rather will I yield and withdraw myself from the bishopric. Wherefore bestow the throne of Antioch upon whom thou wilt, O Emperor!" Theodosius not only released Flavian from the obligation of going to Rome, but declared himself to be "of Flavian's party" from that time forward.[15] It was not Flavian alone who had stood up against the claims of Rome. His Presbyter and his trusted counsellor, Chrysostom, upheld, if he did not suggest the course maintaining the independence of the Catholics of Antioch.

Yet the predominance of the Roman Bishop had been but indirectly gainsaid. The direct resistance of Chrysostom and Flavian had been made to the Emperor and to the Capuan council, not to the Bishop of Rome. Siricius may have felt himself aggrieved. But his pretensions had met with no such rebuff as to be even temporarily allayed. He had done enough without triumphing over the Bishop and the Presbyter of Antioch. The great prelates of the Church, especially of the Western Church, had acknowledged his supremacy. The Emperors

[15] Theod., v. 23.

of both East and West had confessed his power. What could the mass of Catholics do but proffer their allegiance? Individual assertions of liberty would but slightly affect the general submissiveness.[16]

While some were resisting and others supporting a central authority, the common courses of ecclesiastical administration continued in each separate diocese. Preferment to office was, as it had always been, independent of any other supremacy than that of the primate or superior in the province to which the office belonged. The right of suffrage remained with the laity as well as the clergy,[17] while to the posts held by the latter class, the members of the former class were still eligible. Whatever exceptions there were with regard to ordination[18] or to admission into the Church,[19] they emanated from the provincial authorities alone. As yet the sway of the Roman bishopric had no direct bearing upon the mass of the Christians.

Even in relation to the priesthood, the obligations laid upon them by the Roman power were light compared with those enjoined by their own prelates or their own councils. Prohibitions to the Bishop against changing his diocese or aping the luxury of secular rulers[20] are mingled with ordinances affecting every grade beneath him. Trade and usury are

[16] One of the last acts of Siricius was to make peace with Flavian. Theod., v. 23. Soc., vi. 9. Soz., viii. 3.

[17] As Siricius recognizes: "Cleri et plebis electio." Ep. i. c. 10, Ap. Conc., tom. ii. p. 1216.

[18] The details are given by Bingham. Christ. Ant., book iv. ch. 4.

[19] Id., ib., book xi. ch. 5.

[20] Conc. Carthag. iv., c. 15, Ap. Conc., tom. ii. p. 1438.

declared unlawful.[21] Dependence upon the bounties, devotion to the worldly interests of a patron, are frequently denounced.[22] Low haunts and scenes of revelry are amongst the forbidden indulgences.[23] To such an extreme, indeed, reached clerical licentiousness, that scourging was by no means an unusual mode of punishment.[24] To judge by the records of the ancient synods, it would appear that no necessity recurred more repeatedly than that of imposing severe restraints upon the clergy.

The laity stood in proportionate need of rigid restrictions. Many had no other example than that of their priests to follow, no other doctrine than that of their priests to receive. The most independent and the most enlightened depended to a hardly conceivable degree upon their spiritual superiors. Where these were wise and faithful, the masses lived in comparative security. But sad must have been the insecurity both of principle and of practice amongst the laity wherever the clergy ran riot in strifes or corruptions.[25]

The existence of these disorders was made the great plea in favor of centralization amongst the Catholics. What else, it would be urged, has saved the Empire from its perils but the concentration of authority in the imperial hands? What else, it

[21] Conc. Nic., c. 17, Ap. Conc., tom. II. p. 40. Carthag. I., c. 13, ib., p. 751. Carthag. III., c. 16, ib., p. 1402.

[22] As in Conc. Carthag. III., c 15, Ap. Conc , tom. II. p. 1402.

[23] Conc. Laod., c. 24, Ap. Conc., tom. I. p. 1436. Carthag. III., c. 27, ib., tom. II. p. 1403.

[24] "Sæpe enim in judiciis solet ab episcopis adhiberi." August., Ep. 133.

[25] "For if a preest be foule on whom we trust,
No wonder is a lewed [common] man to rust."
CHAUCER.

would be argued, will save the Church? The efforts of the Catholics to improve themselves had been suppressed. Should not their tendencies to degrade themselves be checked? There was no surer way, many and many a one believed, than by submitting to the head of the Church, the Bishop of Rome.

These are painful arguments to rehearse. For they bear witness to a change of feeling amongst the Catholics with regard to the liberty of which they had been chosen as the champions. Once it was the law of love which they were content to obey in faith that it would secure to them the right to liberty and its possession. Then they were Christian freemen. Now they were pleading for a human institution as the means of preserving their liberty. They might be Catholic freemen. But to be a freeman amongst the Catholics was a very different thing from what it had been to be a freeman amongst the Christians of preceding ages. The Christian had obeyed the law of God alone. The Catholic Christian was free in part by submitting to a law of man.

There were some to take another ground. It was a reaction as much against the system of centralization as against the evils which this system undertook to prevent, that appeared in the monastic inclinations of the present age. To every plea on the one hand, in favor of authority, there came an answering argument on the other hand, in behalf of independence. This the ascetics upheld with penances and macerations for its appointed means. This the anchorites asserted from the depths of their retirements. They who gathered into communities

under the name of Cœnobites or Monks, followed in common after the same object which the others pursued apart. To liberate both the mind and the body was the object of all classes embracing the monastic life. Prelacy and centralization, in the opinions of such Christians, were evils as much to be avoided as any others in the world.

To a certain degree, the members of the monastic bodies succeeded in their aim. If liberation meant deliverance from the overweening control of the clergy, they partially obtained it. Whoever became a recluse, whether in a hermitage or in a monastery, threw off much of his dependence upon the priesthood. With the exception of the services at which the clergy alone could officiate, he was his own priest. He was still more decidedly his own teacher. In one sense, he declared himself not merely independent of his ecclesiastical rulers, but superior to them. Did he not assume to be more continent, more devout? Was it not to rise above their corruptions as well as their oppressions that he had fled from them?

Chrysostom, diverted only by his mother's entreaties from the monastic purposes of his youth, continued to regard the monk as a superior being. "I wish," he says, "and I have often prayed, that the necessity of monasteries might be done away; and that good order might so prevail throughout these realms as to leave no one in need of flight into the wilderness. But since things have been turned upside down, since these realms of tribunals and statutes have been crowded with lawlessness

and injustice, the wilderness blooms. . . . . However great the tempest, they of the monasteries abide calm and secure in port, looking, as if from Heaven, at the shipwrecks of other men. For they have chosen a life worthy of Heaven, nor is their state inferior to that of the angels." [26] It seemed as if there was no earthly station to which the monks' could be compared. "The Emperor," writes Chrysostom, "rules over cities, and countries, and many races. Generals, and governors, and armies, and peoples, and senates are controlled by his nod. But he who hath given himself to God, and chosen the monastic life, rules over passion, and envy, and avarice, and lust, and other evils, watching always how he may raise his thoughts above all mortal things. . . . . And more fitly would such an one be styled sovereign than he who sits glorious in robe and crown upon a throne of gold." [27]

Here the preacher paused. With all his admiration for the monastic life, he would not declare it superior to the clerical. Nor did it cross his mind that the monk could be independent of the priesthood. The prelates who had proved themselves greater than any other rulers would not abdicate their authority over their subjects. Certain it is that the tendency to supremacy on the part of the clergy was apparent as soon as the tendency to independence on the part of the monks and their kindred orders. It was inevitable that it should be

[26] Adv. Oppugn. Vit. Monast., I. 7, III. 11.

[27] Comp. Regis et Monachi, 1. The same comparison is made in Adv. Oppugn. Vit. Monast., II. 6.

so. The clergy had but to claim allegiance,[28] and it was yielded.

Already had submission been made amongst the monks to rulers of their own. The liberty in chase of which they had sped to the desert or to the monastery had receded as they followed. A system of authority open on all sides to oppression had blocked up the ways through which the various classes of recluses were seeking independence. Of the necessity of bringing the monastic orders under restraint, the stanchest advocates of their principles make ample confession. The accounts given by Jerome concerning the excesses amongst his contemporary recluses are absolutely appalling.[29] There was no body of monks but stood in need of authoritative rulers.

As yet, the vows of the recluse were not unalterable. He might return, as he pleased, to the scenes which he had formerly abhorred. He might strive, if he desired, after the honors which he had once renounced. Monks were soon engaged in competing for the offices of the clergy. With such impetuosity did they change their course, that Siricius of Rome, in declaring them eligible to ecclesiastical stations, was obliged to forbid their "ascending with one bound to the dignity of the episcopate."[30] There could not have been much independence with the monks when such a decree

[28] As at the council of Chalcedon, in the year 451. See the fourth and eighth canons.

[29] See Gieseler's citations, notes 11, 28 to § 95, Man. Eccl. Hist.

[30] Ep. I., ap. Conc., tom. II. p. 1217. A law of 398 recommends Bishops to recruit their clergy "ex monachorum numero." Cod. Theod., lib. XVI. tit. II. 30.

was necessary. Still less could there have been any maintenance of the superiority which they had once claimed over the clergy.

All the while the fact was becoming plain that the independence of the monastic, like the authority of the sacerdotal orders, was but of human institution. Whatever liberty such an institution might secure, it could not, of itself, establish the Christian in possession of his true liberty. Many a monk who had trusted to set himself free by retirement came back to the liberty that was to be more truly proved in the midst of his fellow-men.

When Valens the Emperor was bent upon suppressing the Catholic party, he saw an old man meanly dressed, hastening through the square before the palace at Antioch. Some one remarked that it was Aphraates, a renowned monk of Syria. "Whither goest thou?" cried out the Emperor. "To pray for your Imperial Majesty," replied the recluse. "But thou shouldest have stayed at home and to have prayed there, according to the monastic laws." "You speak truly, O Emperor," answered Aphraates. "I should have done so. And I have always done so, while the Saviour's sheep were at peace. But now that they have fallen into great danger of being devoured by wild beasts, it is necessary for me to try every means whereby the sheep may be saved. Were I a maiden sitting in my chamber, and taking care of the house, tell me what ought I to do, were my father's dwelling to catch fire? Ought I to sit within, neglecting the burning building, and waiting the approach of the flames? Or

ought I rather, leaving my chamber, to run up and down, and bring water, and extinguish the fire? Certainly this, you will say, is what I ought to do. And now that you," concluded the earnest monk, "have set fire to our Father's house, we are abroad endeavoring to extinguish the conflagration."[31] At such a period, there could have been few men, worthy of the name, content to save themselves while their brethren were wavering or perishing.

If there was any class for which above all others the monastic life appeared to be designed, it was that of women. While the world without was ringing with alarms and conflicts, they seemed to need a world within where they could rest in safety. Yet not even women could always be at peace in their monasteries. Dearly did they have to pay in many instances for the refuge which they sought.

Amongst the most illustrious recluses of the age was Paula, a high-born widow of Rome. Weary, it is said, of the frivolities and the corruptions of society, she determined to remove her abode to the solitudes of the Holy Land. The first step was one of agony. Of five children, but one was allowed to accompany her mother. Of the rest, "her little son," writes her teacher Jerome, "stood on the shore, stretching out his suppliant hands. Her daughter, of marriageable years, appeared to beseech with silent tears that her mother would await her nuptials. Yet she fixed her dry eyes on the heavens, conquering her love towards her children

[31] Theod., iv. 26.

by love towards her God."[32] The pilgrim settled at Bethlehem, where four monasteries and an asylum for strangers were built at her expense. One of these establishments was taken under her own care. Another was entrusted to Jerome, to whose instructions Paula had yielded in determining to separate herself from her children. Nor did Paula, any more than many another woman, find that she had gained the rest or the freedom which she sought at every sacrifice. For twenty years her liberalities towards her adviser and towards the multitude of dependents attracted to their monasteries, continued until her immense estate was literally dissipated. All this did not save the recluse from oppression or from suffering. Toils and penances kept pace with her charities. "Hers," wrote Jerome, "hath been a long martrydom."[33] Nor could Paula say, before she lay upon her death-bed, that "all was quiet and tranquil."[34]

Often as the monastic life had proved insufficient to the wants of its votaries, it was still the ideal of many Christians. So manifold were the forms assumed by oppression, so few were the forms in which it could be opposed, that every hope of liberty was certain to be seized upon. Nor was any rank too

[32] Ep. 86. "Si Christianam et Monacham cogito," writes Jerome to Paula on another occasion, "istis nominibus mater excluditur." Ep. 22.

"For mine own part," ejaculates the worthy Fuller, "I think she had done as acceptable a deed to God, in staying behind to rock her child in the cradle as to visit Christ's manger." The Holy State, xi.

[33] "Longo martyrio coronatur." Hier., Ep. 86.

[34] Hier., Ep. 86. She died at the age of fifty-six in 404.

high to be reached by the afflictions which excited this longing for deliverance.

A noble of Bordeaux, possessing the largest measure both of personal advantages and of public honors, the young and the illustrious Paulinus, presented himself for baptism. From that moment he was lost to the sight of those who had known him. A journey in search of seclusion led him into Spain, whence the rumor returned to Bordeaux, that he and his wife, the companion of his devotions as of his former splendors, had resolved upon a life-long retirement. It was not the first time that the rich and the noble had renounced their dignities and their possessions for the sake of peace. But this was an instance to excite the utmost amazement in Bordeaux and throughout the West. Paulinus had studied under Ausonius. Zealous to save his pupil, as he would phrase it, the courtly rhetorician takes it upon himself to express the universal disapproval of the course upon which Paulinus was said to be determined.[35] The reply was decisive. "So to live unto Christ as Christ hath sanctioned," writes Paulinus,[36] "is my delight, and of such an error I cannot be ashamed. . . . . This is my fear, this my labor, lest the last day may find me lulled in deep darkness, wasting my misused opportunities in empty cares. . . . . If this displeases you, leave

[35] Auson., Ep. 22, 23, 24.

[36] "Sic vivere Christo
Ut Christus sanxit, juvat hoc, nec pœnitet hujus
Erroris . . .
Hic metus est, labor iste : dies ne me ultimus atris
Sopitum tenebris sterili deprendat in actu
Tempora sub vacuis ducentem perdita curis. . . . .
Si contra est, Christo tantum me linque probari."
PAUL. NOL., Poema x. ed Pisaur.

This was near 393, Paulinus being then about forty years of age.

me to be judged by Christ." To make these words deeds, Paulinus entered upon the monastic life.

His career as a monk was suddenly terminated by his being ordained a Presbyter at Barcelona.[37] As if for fear of higher honors, Paulinus set out at once upon his way to Nola, in Italy, where he had already designed to live in seclusion. On the route thither, he met Ambrose of Milan, by whom he was enrolled upon the lists of the Milanese clergy as an honorary member.[38] A different reception awaited him at Rome. While "monks, priests, clergymen and laymen," as he says, thronged about the nobly-born Presbyter, the Bishop kept aloof. It was for Paulinus, he would reason, to seek his favor, not for him to give it unsought, as readily as if he were any ordinary prelate. Paulinus complained of the Bishop's inattention.[39] To pacify the ill-will from which he supposes it to have sprung, he came a second time in the humbler guise of a pilgrim to the shrines of the Apostolic See.[40]

The Bishop whom Paulinus thus sought to appease was no other than Siricius. He had lived more than long enough[41] to see the working of the centralization which he did more than any other individual to confirm. He could likewise discern the result of the reaction which his system had

[37] "Per vim inflammatæ subito plebis sacratus sum." Paul. Nol., Ep. 3, ed. Paris. The scene is described in Ep. 1.

[38] Id., Ep. 3.

[39] Ep. 5. See Baronius, Ann. Eccl., Ad Ann. 394, tom. IV. p. 717, ed. Antv.

[40] Ep. 17, 20, 43, 45, all refer to his yearly pilgrimages from Nola to Rome. They seem to have been begun at an earlier date. See Ep. 20.

[41] He died in 398, after having held his bishopric for thirteen years.

excited. The most eminent of those who embraced the monastic life surrenders its independence for a place in the priesthood. The independence which he would have exercised as a priest fails as he enters into the atmosphere of Rome. There, dominant alike over priests and monks, laymen and prelates, sat enthroned the head of the Catholic centralization.

And what of liberty? Where centralization triumphed, though it were under the Catholic name, liberty must have faltered and failed. The monk had asserted it; but in vain. As vainly had it been claimed by those who remained in the world, striving with its oppressions and its errors. The only ones to be called free were those who were in power. In other words, the ruler, and no other, was the freeman. The subject had lost the greater portion of his liberty. In such circumstances there was no room but for centralization. It prevailed; and liberty was virtually abandoned by the Catholics.

With this, ended the part of the Roman Christians in the development of liberty. Their martyrs had died. Their prelates had ruled. What was yet to be done for liberty needed other hands. The Roman Christians would not be set aside. But they were no longer to be alone in the knowledge or in the possession of Christian liberty. They were no longer to be the foremost in maintaining it. Their part, as the chief Christian race upon the earth, was over.

It was over, so far as the subjects amongst them

were concerned. The lower orders had risen as high as they could under existing influences. The laws above them showed no signs of being extended. The powers within them gave no promise of being expanded. Their right to liberty, therefore, and their possession of it bade fair to remain just as they then were. Yet for these to continue unaltered was the same as for liberty to continue undeveloped, nay more, repressed.

The part of the Roman Christians was over in all that related to the rulers amongst them. Whatever the sovereign could do for the faith adopted by Constantine, had been done. It was not much. It was the work of one acting for himself rather than for the religion which he professed. Consequently it was but little to the advantage of the liberty following the faith of the Christian. The age of prelates boasted its resistance to the imperial authority. Had this authority been upon the right side, resistance to it would not have been deemed necessary. Yet there had been as much submission as resistance. The part of the Emperor and his officials in checking the development of liberty was far from being over. All the more evident was the termination of their part in sustaining liberty.

But not the imperial rulers alone were at fault. The ecclesiastical rulers were equally incapable of sustaining liberty. They had maintained themselves, they would urge, against the sovereign and his dependents. But what could they say of their own dependents? Had not their oppression of these more than counterbalanced their independence of

the imperial authorities? It was of little avail that a prelate had braved the sovereign, if he or his colleagues were to crush the subject. The rulers of the Church were become as oppressive as those of the Empire. Indeed, they were more so, in that beneficence, relief, liberation, anything rather than oppression, was naturally expected from them. Unable to fulfil their proper office, unable, at least, to do it by itself, without intermingling other offices with it, the part of the ecclesiastical rulers in developing liberty came to an end.

Was this the work of the Early Christians? Was this the preparation for union? Had the liberty of the subject been proclaimed against the old centralization only to lead to a new one? It could not be so. Centralization might be raised amongst the Roman Christians. Amongst them union might be laid low. But there were others besides the Roman Christians in the world. To them the work of preparing union might pass. Through them it might revive amongst the Roman Christians themselves.

Whence was relief to come? The Church was wasting.[42] The world itself was waning.[43] Could restoration be wrought by gentle means? Could liberation be achieved by peaceful deeds? It seemed rather as if all the clamor of war, all the agony of force would be needed before the Christians could recover the liberty and the faith that had been revealed.

[42] "Et crescentibus filiis suis, Mater ægrotat, factaque es, Ecclesia, profectu tuæ fæcunditatis infirmior!" Salvian., Ad Eccl. Cath., 1. p. 341.

[43] "In occasu seculi sumus!" exclaims Ambrose. Exp. Evang. Sec. Luc., x. 11.

BOOK IV.

THE NORTHERN CHRISTIANS.

A. D. 400–565.

"Tout y était en effet, tout s'y rencontre, les principes comme les exemples de la liberté, du despotisme."

GUIZOT, *Sur l'Hist. de France*, Essai IV. ch. 3.

BOOK IV.

THE NORTHERN CHRISTIANS.

CHAPTER I.

ALARIC.

"'T is enough,
Britain, that I have killed thy mistress" *Cymbeline.*

A NEW race takes up the arms no longer wielded by the Roman Christians. It is in a severer strife than had yet occurred. The Roman Christians had contended chiefly against the imperial centralization. It was against centralization in the Church as well as in the Empire that the battle was to be fought by the Northern Christians.

Of these we have already had a glimpse. The followers of Ulphilas the Visigoth were the forerunners of the mightier host appointed to descend upon the Roman Empire. They came as warriors, ready to destroy. They came as Christians, ready to believe. But not in the principles of the Catholics. Not, at least, in those principles by which the Cath-

olics had raised their centralization. The Christians of the North were Arians. This faith of theirs added to the power with which they appeared invested to do their work of destruction. Yet it also stayed them in their work. The fact of their belief in any Christian doctrine made it apparent that they would not destroy all things before them. It was equally evident that in place of what they destroyed, there might be something of their own to be upreared.

Far different was the aspect of the invaders who came unconverted. Their inroads were those of warriors alone. No strength to reconstruct, no disposition to spare, appeared amongst the races not yet acquainted with the Christian religion. Wherever such as these broke in, it was with sword and fire, with terror and agony unallayed. Why they were allowed to pursue a course so wild, is plain. Their part was to swell the force of the Christian invaders. Where these faltered, where these spared, the unbeliever dashed on with fearful menace, with irresistible violence. It was another question whether the more furious invaders would prove the more victorious or the more enduring.

Already had the races of the North and the East begun upon tempestuous marches to the West and the South.[1] Nations advancing in the rear had compelled the Visigoths to cross the Danube. Behind them tumultuous movements continued to urge them farther and farther into the Roman territories. As if to convert an assailant into a defender, Theo-

[1] "Ces tempêtes de peuples." Amédée Thierry, Rev. des Deux Mondes, tom. xi. p. 288, nouv. série.

dosius appointed the Visigothic chieftain Alaric to the command of the imperial mercenaries.[2] But in the year following, and within a few months from the death of Theodosius, Alaric appeared in Thrace at the head of his troops, followed by a large number of his countrymen. The leader of this invasion was the leader in the great onslaught of the Northern nations upon the Roman Empire.

Alaric soon traversed Thrace to Greece. After spreading havoc through that country, he consented to retire northwards on condition of being made Præfect of the province called Eastern Illyria.[3] Taking possession of his government, the Visigoth kept the imperial arsenals busy in providing him with arms, until he was ready to start with his daily increasing followers upon fresh forays. The exultation of his nation at the prospects to which he had already led them, showed itself in their proclaiming Alaric as their king.[4] How such a chieftain, in such a situation, grew impatient of possessing a single province while the whole Empire lay before him, is easily imagined. Everything promised a better harvest in the Western realms than could be found to the Eastward. Six years after his irruption into Thrace, Alaric was on his march across the Alps to Italy.

Meanwhile the courts of the two sons, between whom Theodosius had divided his dominions, had been the prey of intrigues and disorders unnecessary

[2] 394. Zos., v. 5. Soc., VII. 10.
[3] 397. Zos., v. 6.
[4] 398. Jornandes, De Reb. Get., 29.

to be told. Arcadius, the elder of the imperial brothers, had donned the purple at Constantinople, where one minister or one faction after another held the actual supremacy. The frontiers were crossed by a horde of Eastern warriors, whose ravages were simultaneous with revolts and conflicts within the imperial boundaries.[5] In the West, Honorius, the younger brother, had hitherto worn his crown with greater security. Thanks to the Vandal Stilicho, the minister and afterwards the father-in-law of the youthful sovereign, the Western provinces escaped the disorders by which the realms of Arcadius were well-nigh ruined.

The Northern invader was resisted by the Northern minister. The only stand against the first invasion of Alaric was made by the troops of the Western Emperor under Stilicho's command. For this service, or, as it proved, this show of service on the part of the Vandal minister, he was declared a public enemy by the minister who ruled the East.[6] But for the Vandal, again, Alaric would have met no opposition that could have prevented him from sweeping all the Western territories.[7] It was Stilicho who called the legions in from their stations throughout the provinces. It was Stilicho who collected a force

[5] From 396 onwards. Gildo revolts in Africa; Tribigildus, a Goth, in Phrygia; Gainas, also a Goth, at Constantinople. See the picture in Philostorg., xi. 8. Zos., v. 11 *et seq.*

[6] Zos., v. 7, 11.

[7] "Salus erat Stilichon, qui desperantibus augur
Sponderet meliora manu: dubiæque salutis
Dux idem vatesque fuit."
Claud., *De Bell. Get.*, 267.
See the inscriptions in Orelli, Insc. Lat. Sel., 1133, 1134.

from the tribes upon the frontiers.[8] Thus arraying the North against the North, Stilicho provided an army with which Alaric was resisted, though not defeated.[9] Not all the exertions of Stilicho or of his auxiliaries could drive back the Visigoth from Italy. But on the offer of a tribute from the court of Honorius, as well as of an appointment to the government of Western Illyria,[10] Alaric withdrew for a time to the domains of which he had accepted the administration. Actually, they formed a principality of his own, stretching from the Adriatic to the Euxine.

Other swarms of invaders were already on the wing. Years, probably, had passed, since Radagaisus, the chieftain of a Northern[11] tribe, began his march towards the South, when he descended upon the Italian soil not many months subsequent to Alaric's departure.[12] He came with a numerous host, some say of two,[13] and some of four[14] hundred thousand warriors from various nations of the North. But after perpetrating repeated outrages, Radagaisus was surprised and routed by Stilicho and his North-

[8] On the composition of the imperial troops from "Batavi" to "Parthi," and from "Scythii" to "Numidæ," see the Notit. Imp. IV.–VIII., XVIII.–XXXI. for the East, and XXVIII.–XL., LVI.–LXV. for the West.

[9] 403. At Pollentia, near the upper course of the Po. Prosper (Chron., Ad Ann. 403) tells the truth: "Adversum Gothos vehementer utriusque partis clade Pollentiæ pugnatum." Jornandes the Goth (De Bell. Get., 30) and Orosius the Christian (VII. 37) speak of the battle as a Gothic victory. Claudian (De Bell. Get., 635 *et seq.*) alone calls it a Roman victory.

[10] Olympiod., p. 448, ed. Nieb.

[11] "Rex Gothorum." Hist. Miscell., lib. XIII. p. 91, ed. Muratori.

[12] 404, 405. Augustine (Serm. 105,) is decisive upon the point that Radagaisus and Alaric were separate leaders.

[13] Oros., VII. 37.

[14] Zos., v. 26. "Ingenti exercitu multo numerosiore quam Alarici fuit." Aug., Serm. 105.

ern legions.[15] Of the vast array supposed to have followed after the defeated chieftain, the greater number had passed from the German forests directly into the plains of Gaul. The overthrow of Radagaisus was followed up by the issue of imperial edicts calling the inhabitants of the provinces to arms, and even offering freedom to the provincial slaves in return for service in the field.[16]

All this was passing beneath the eyes of Alaric in his Illyrian principality. Traditions, current at the time, allude to his boast that he would some day or other make himself master of Rome.[17] At all events, the murder of Stilicho,[18] the only formidable opponent to his inroads, was followed by the reappearance of Alaric in the Italian territory. There was nothing to resist his progress except at Ravenna, whither the Emperor Honorius had removed his residence in order to be beyond the reach alike of his subjects and his enemies. Elsewhere, the country lay at the mercy of the Visigoth, who pressed on to Rome, resolved to deal a blow that should be felt throughout the Empire. He accordingly laid siege to the city, which bore the trial better than could have been anticipated after all its infirmities. But the odds were too great; and the ransom of Rome had to be made up from the statues[19] of its

[15] With recruits even from the Huns. Hist. Miscell., XIII. p. 91. On the defeat, compare the authorities already cited.

[16] Cod. Theod., lib. VII. tit. XIII. 16, 17.

[17] Claud., De Bell. Get., 345 *et seq.*

[18] 408. Zos., v. 34. Not only Stilicho's dependents but their families were massacred with him. Id., ib. 35.

[19] Amongst them was one of Valor, "on the loss of which," says the Heathen historian, "all that was brave and virtuous amongst the Romans disappeared." Zos., v. 41.

forums and the ornaments of its temples. A short time only had intervened when Alaric, angered at the proceedings of the court as well as of its Roman subjects, reduced the city a second time to submission.[20] He even went so far as to proclaim a new sovereign in the person of the Præfect Attalus. Soon deposing him, however,[21] Alaric again engaged in cutting off the resources of the Emperor Honorius by a third assault upon Rome, which he now gave up to sack and desolation.[22] Within less than a week, he saw the ruin of the city that still seemed to contain the heart's blood of the Empire. "The thicker the grass," he said with fearful animosity, "the easier it is to thin."[23]

Nor did his scythe spare aught besides the churches of the Christians.[24] To their religion, as it had been preached by Ulphilas, Alaric had declared his adhesion. The contrast between him, as a believer, and his fellow-invader Radagaisus, as an unbeliever,[25] struck their contemporaries. Both came with purposes of conquest. But the havoc wrought by Radagaisus in one brief invasion appears to have surpassed the utmost cruelties of Alaric during all his descents upon the imperial territories. The terror that the Arian did not everywhere inspire was universally excited by the Heathen. What the Christian of the North might leave undone, the Heathen of the North was impetuous to do.

[20] 409. Zos., VI. 6.

[21] Zos., VI. 7, 12. Procop., De Bell. Vand., I. 2.

[22] 410. Procop., De Bell. Vand., I. 2. Oros., VII. 39.

[23] Zos., V. 40.

[24] Augustin., De Civ. Dei, I. 1.

[25] Oros., VII. 37. August., Serm 105.

All-alarming, however, was the aspect of Alaric as the conqueror of Rome. The Catholic historian exults over the fall of the city itself as of the second Sodom.[26] Nor were any more ready to regard the invasion as a retribution for their own sins and shames than the Catholic Paulinus, then the Bishop of Nola.[27] Yet all suffered from the apprehensions and the afflictions of which Alaric was the cause. "Every house," writes a Christian in describing the attack upon Rome, "every house was in mourning. Fear was the same to all. The slave and the noble were in the same condition. Before all rose the same image of death."[28] Fugitives of every class and of every creed sped away in search of safety.[29] The thought of resistance appears to have been still farther removed from the Christians than from the Heathen. The latter mustered their troops, and while they had a leader, engaged in battle. But the Christians deserted their posts in the legions[30] and at the tribunals[31] for the prayers of the sanctuary or the penances of the cell. When Rome was in danger from the arms of Alaric, the Bishop of the city went on an embassy to urge the necessity of peace upon the imperial court, then at Ravenna.[32] It seemed as if the Christians felt

[26] Oros., VII. 39.

[27] "Credite, non armis neque viribus esse timendos
Allophylum populos, quos propter crimina nostra
Offensi movet ira Dei, ut formidine mortis
Excitet ad curam vitæ torpentia corda."
Poema XXIII.
Paulinus, after some twelve years' retirement at Nola, was made Bishop in 409. Vit. Paul., 50, ap. Op., ed. Paris, 1685.

[28] Pelagius, Ad Demet., 30.

[29] Jerome speaks of their escaping to all parts of the East. In Ezek., lib. III. Præf.

[30] See Paul. Nol., Ep. 25.

[31] Id., Ep. 38.

[32] Zos., V. 45. Oros., VII. 39.

that the Visigoth was the instrument of the Divine displeasure, and therefore irresistible.[33] "I am not marching," said Alaric himself to a monk who would have stayed his course, "not marching of my own accord, but because there is One daily bidding me to press on and ravage Rome."[34]

All this was full of menace against the centralization which the Catholics had reared. The invader had dealt his severest blows where they had laid the foundations of their system. It could not fall at once. It might not fall for ages. But it was threatened by every success of the Northern Christians.

For his own part, Alaric aimed at higher and still higher prizes as the first sank below the level of his victories. It must have been he who originated the design of which his successor spoke in reference to the establishment of a Gothic Empire.[35] Rome itself could not satisfy him for more than a few days. He hurried southwards; but on the eve of crossing to Sicily and Africa, he was seized with an illness from which he shortly died. To give him burial where no Roman foot could tread upon his bones, his countrymen turned the course of the river Busentinus until they could dig a grave beneath its channel.[36]

Ataulphus, the brother-in-law of the deceased chieftain, assumed the command, and led back his followers to Rome, whence, after long delay, he pro-

[33] August., De Civ. Dei, I. 7.

[34] Soc., VII. 10. Soz., IX. 16.

[35] Oros., VII. 43.

[36] Still 410. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 30.

ceeded into Gaul.[37] It is more probable that the Visigoths were weary of their Italian conquests, than that their leader was able to draw them off against their will in order to gratify the Emperor, or the Emperor's sister Placidia, whom Ataulphus had espoused. More profitable negotiations as well as more exciting conflicts were to be had in the Western provinces. Under Vallia, the next chieftain but one to Ataulphus, the Visigoths engaged, apparently as the imperial allies, in wars with the Northern tribes who had crossed to Spain. The country was nominally reduced beneath the imperial government. But a treaty was concluded with Vallia, recognizing the right of the Visigoth to the kingdom of Aquitaine in Southern Gaul.[38] As far, therefore, as regarded the nation of Alaric, his inroads had but transferred their domains from Illyria to fairer regions in the West.

But the result of his inroads in relation to the Romans was in every way remarkable. He had struck at the Catholic centralization. The effect was evident. Much more evident, however, was the effect produced by his assault upon the imperial centralization. The realms that had been united under this dominion were pierced and severed by the invader.

New names appear on the records of the West. The Franks had previously penetrated into Northern Gaul. But through the openings created by

[37] Prosper., Chron., Ad Ann. 413. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 31.

[38] Idatius, Chron., I. 22, 24. Isidor., Chron. Got., p. 207, ed. Lugd. Prosper., Chron., Ad Ann. 420. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 33.

the recall of the imperial troops to Italy, the prospect of wider conquests was obtained. Fresh comers appeared in the Vandals, the Sueves and the Alans, driving across the centre and the south of Gaul into Spain, whence they subsequently retired before the Visigoths into Africa.[39] About the same time, the eastern part of Gaul was invaded by the Burgundians.[40] Against the violence from which the imperial subjects suffered,[41] there was literally no defence. The few who undertook to maintain the authority of their sovereigns or their laws, found themselves in the midst of conflicting revolutions. Officer after officer to whom the invaded provinces were committed, employed his powers in maintaining his short-lived pretensions to the throne, bereft as it was of majesty.[42] That such events should have filled these fearful years must be ascribed at once to the Visigothic irruption into Italy. The central citadel could not thus be stormed without the exposure of its outskirts to still more fatal foes.

From one province the legions were totally withdrawn. "Rome was assaulted," says the ancient chronicle, "and thenceforth the Roman sway expired in the island of Britain."[43]

[39] From 406 onwards. Prosper., Chron., Ad Ann. 410. Isidor., Chron. Got., pp. 207, 208, Chron. Wand., p. 266. Oros., VII. 40. Proc., De Bell. Vand., I. 3. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 32, 33.

[40] 414, 417. Prosper., Chron., Ad Ann.

[41] Marlot (Hist. de Reims, livre IV. ch. 20, 21) describes the ravages of the Vandals in the north of Gaul.

[42] Gerontius and Maximus in 409; Jovinus and Sebastianus in 412: all in Spain and Gaul. Heraclianus, in 412, rose in Africa. Oros., VII. 42. Zos., VI. 5. Olympiod., pp. 453 *et seq.*, ed. Nieb.

[43] Ethelward, Chron., lib. I. init. So Bede, Eccl. Hist., I. 11.

The first signs of the separation appear amongst the imperial troops. Various parties, contending with one another, exalt each its own leader as a sovereign. From amongst these there emerges a single officer with the name of Constantine, who, crossing the channel, compels the Emperor Honorius to accept him for a colleague.[44] He soon, however, yields to the general Constantius, the successor of Stilicho in the defence of the Western court.[45] Meanwhile the inhabitants of Britain, abandoned by the Roman legionaries, yielded to the weakness entailed upon them by their long subjugation. Disturbances, of which not even the outlines can be traced, arose in the island and in the British settlements on the Gallic side of the channel.[46] It may be that these commotions were excited by the unwillingness of the Britons who had been under the Roman dominion to acquiesce in the assumption of sovereignty by Constantine. His overthrow, however, did not restore tranquillity. The rise of various chieftains in the South probably proved as disastrous as the inroads which began from the North so soon as the withdrawal of the Roman forces left the Southern districts undefended. Repeated applications were made to the imperial gov-

[44] 407 – 409. Bede, Eccl. Hist., I. 11. Oros., VII. 40. Zos., v. 27, 43, VI. 2.

[45] 411. Oros., VII. 42. Zos., VI. 4, 5, 13. Constantius, marrying the widow of Ataulphus and the sister of Honorius, was declared a colleague of Honorius some ten years afterwards.

[46] Zos., VI. 5, 10. On the recent and subsequent settlements in Armorica, see Nennius, 27; Gildas, 14; Ethelward, Ad Ann. 418; and the brief but decisive argument in the work entitled "Britannia after the Romans," vol. I. pp. 19 *et seq.*

ernment for aid. In a few instances it was granted.[47] But the time soon arrived when even the occasional appearance of Roman troops became impossible. Britain was forever dismembered from the Empire of Rome.[48]

This, too, was the work of Alaric. But for his marches, the hold of the imperial centralization upon its provinces might have continued. The loss of one province ushered in the loss of all. The centralization of the Empire had received its death-wound.

Striking does it seem that Britain should have been the first of the provinces to be dismembered. Weak as the island then was, its liberation from the Roman sway prepared its future strength. The land first freed from the Roman centralization was destined to be the first possessed of modern liberty.

Honorius continued to reign in the West. In the East, the crown had been transferred by the death of Arcadius to his son Theodosius.[49] The elder sister of the young sovereign, Pulcheria, herself a girl in years, soon assumed the regency of the Eastern court with the title of Empress.[50] All her nobleness of character,[51] however, could not avert the destinies already opened to the well-named Lower Empire. Farther eastward both the rulers and the subjects of the dependent or the neighbor-

[47] The last petition was made and refused in 446. Bede, I. 13. Gildas, 20.

[48] The imperial historian of the next century speaks of it as a portion of an unknown world. Proc., Bell. Goth., IV. 20.

[49] 408. Soc., VII. 1.

[50] 415. Marcell., Chron., Indict. II. 12, III. 12.

[51] Of which the historian gives some feeble outlines. Soz., IX. 1.

ing states descend, as it were, beneath the horizon of history.[52] In turning his course westward, Alaric had unconsciously separated the East from the higher prospects of the West.

Dark was the present even there. The blasts from the North had covered the earth and the seas with gloom. But as the tempest rose, and the ocean heaved beneath it, the ebb of centralization began.[53] In place of an unbroken dominion, there were appearing from beneath the waters the peaks and jutting lands upon which liberty would one day be enthroned.

[52] Armenia was divided between Rome and Persia in 390. The treaty of division was consummated in 416, and Armenia came to an end in 429. It had been "the first Christian nation." St. Martin's edit. of Le Beau, tom. IV. p. 429, tom. V. p. 443, tom. VI. pp. 31, 32.

[53] "Hence," wrote Dr. Browne of Newcastle, (on Civil Liberty, sect. IX.) "the Progress and Retreat of the Roman Power resembled the Flow and Ebb of a vast Ocean; which, roused from its bed by central concussions, overwhelmed and forsook the Earth."

CHAPTER II.

MARCELLA AND OLYMPIAS.

"And oft supported so as shall amaze
Their proudest persecutors." *Paradise Lost.*

The appearance of the Northern Christians renewed the part of the Roman Christians in the cause of liberty. They seemed to gather strength that would not have come to them in quieter times. They not only stood up against their invaders. They also resisted their own oppressors.

Of this reviving independence we find remarkable representatives in the two women whose names give a title to the present chapter. The one, Marcella, belonged to the West. The other, Olympias, was of the East. Both wear the same free mien amongst the surrounding groups of trembling rulers, of cringing courtiers, of terrified subjects, and of triumphant warriors.

"A terrible rumor," writes Jerome from his monastery at Bethlehem, "reaches us that Rome is besieged, that the safety of its citizens is redeemed with gold, and that, though despoiled, they are again assailed so as to lose their lives

as well as their fortunes. The voice breaks. Sobs interrupt the words of one who would speak. The city which took the whole world is itself taken."[1]

The same letter bewails the loss of Marcella. One of the blood-stained invaders, it seems, had broken into her dwelling. To his demands for her treasures, she replied that she had none to surrender. "Look at my mean attire!" she exclaimed. Blows had no effect upon her firmness. All that she thought of was to save the honor of the maiden living with her as the companion of her old age. "Let me have her," she urged, "and you may have the rest." Her desire was granted. The maiden and her protectress were carried to the basilica of St. Paul. Full of joy at having rescued her friend, Marcella forgot her own losses. But she was aged and infirm. The terrors of the time, however resisted by her courageous spirit, were too much for her frail flesh to bear. A few days afterwards, "she slept," writes the sorrowing Jerome, "in the Lord."[2]

"Of all the saints," he exclaims, "and of the city of Rome, she was the crowning glory."[3] There was reason to praise Marcella. Upwards of forty years had she lived in all the virtues which a Christian woman of birth[4] and fortune could then have been expected to practise. She

[1] "Capitur urbs quæ totum cepit orbem." Hier., Ep. 96.
[2] Ep. 96.
[3] Ibid.
[4] "Stemmata per Consules et Præfectos Prætorio decurrentia." Ibid.

might be over-ascetic, so that the powers which would have been better employed in action for others were exhausted in endurance for herself. She might be over self-sacrificing, so that the affections and the tastes that would have added to her excellence were rudely abjured. Yet in this, Marcella was but following the tendency prevailing with all desirous of a holy life. In no other way, she thought, could her liberty as a Christian be proved or be preserved. More true, as indications of her liberty, were the graces which she allowed herself to wear. More true were the deeds of beneficence which she allowed herself to perform.

Nor had these exertions been all that proved the high-souled woman. They were preceded by an act of independence which few of that generation would have had the nerve to attempt, much more to achieve. Marcella had been left a widow a few months after her espousals. As a lady of rank and of wealth, besides being in the very bloom of her years, she was a mark for men who strove to raise themselves by marriage. No less a suitor than a connection of the imperial house[5] sought her hand. The sovereign may have sustained the suit. But it was denied. Perhaps her refusal was visited by some sentence from the Emperor. What was her punishment cannot be seen. But she was "driven by winds," it is

[5] As to who he was, see Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. XII. p. 67 and note, p. 630.

said, "shipwrecked," declares the ancient writer, "and taught by her experience the vanity of this world."[6] Still Marcella was firm. She had chosen her course. Nor would she leave it, though twenty times wrecked by opposing blasts.

The life of Marcella had its counterpart in that of Olympias, the younger of the two by about twenty years.[7] As the Western capital was the home of the elder, so the Eastern capital was the home of the younger.

Born of a great family, and married into another great family at Constantinople, Olympias, after a few months of married life, was left a widow at an early age. Young as she was, she had determined upon her duty. She would remain single that she might devote her powers and her vast possessions to the religion in which she devoutly believed.

Her resolution was soon tried. A relation of the Emperor Theodosius wished to become her second husband. Her rejection of his suit was taken up as a personal matter by the sovereign. The fortune of the young widow was put under guardianship of the Præfect of Constantinople. He was further directed to prevent her from entering her church or communing with her clergy. "You have acted graciously," wrote the dauntless woman to the Emperor, "in relieving me of the anxieties

[6] Cited by Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. XII. p. 69. It is uncertain whether this alludes to any imperial judgment upon Marcella. Tillemont does not make it so.

[7] Olympias was born about 365, Marcella about 345.

caused by the necessity of managing my estate. You will do more for me, if you will order it to be distributed to the Church and to the poor."[8] It was but three or four years before the property of Olympias was restored. So soon had she triumphed over her sovereign.

More than ever devoted to her faith, Olympias was ordained a Deaconess.[9] This happened about the time when Alaric's irruption into the Eastern provinces threw them and their capital into consternation. It was a season in which the security promised by the offices of the Church would be attractive to all, and most of all, to one long consecrated to a religious life. The whole heart of Olympias was at once wrapped up in the labors of her new position. No one could have been more earnest. No one could have been more severe. Denying herself all other intercourse besides that in which she was officially engaged, the Deaconess lived in self-devotion amongst her companions in the Church at Constantinople.[10]

Thus passed some years. At length an assault, hereafter to be described, was made upon John Chrysostom, then Archbishop of Constantinople. Obliged to retire before his foes, he made his adieux to those most nearly connected with him in his see. Having bade farewell to his clergy, the Archbishop summoned his Deaconesses to his

[8] Pall., Dial. de Vit. Chrys., cap. XVII.

[9] Chrys., Ep. 1. Soz., VIII. 9.

[10] Chrysostom describes her ascetic habits. Ep. 2.

side. With two or three companions, Olympias, "inseparable," says the biographer, "from the Church," came to the chapel in which the persecuted Primate awaited them. "This is what I ask of you," said he. "Let no one of you be drawn away from your wonted devotion to the Church. And whosoever shall be ordained in my place, without having sought it, yet by the choice of all, to him submit as to me; for the Church cannot exist without a Bishop. And so farewell! Remember me in your prayers!" It was with difficulty that those whom he addressed were separated from him.[11] When they did leave him, it must have been to service more earnest than ever in the cause for which their Primate had suffered.

As one of his most attached adherents, Olympias was presently accused of being concerned in burning the church in which the exiled prelate had been wont to officiate. "It is not my style," she answered the presiding Præfect, "to burn churches. I have employed my wealth in building them." The Præfect exclaimed that he knew what her style of living had been. "Then take the place of my accuser," she said, "and let another decide between us!" Changing his ground, the Præfect advised her to seek communion with the new Archbishop. "Let me meet the first charge," replied Olympias. She was remanded. But on being again brought up before the Præfect, she

[11] Pall., Dial. de Vit. Chrys., cap. x.

appears to have received the order to follow Chrysostom into exile.[12]

His sympathy consoled her. "Soldiers have arms," wrote Chrysostom to Olympias, "which are useful only for the defence of the body, and not always or lastingly for that. . . . . But your arms, not barbaric weapons, not the engines of warlike men, not employed in attacks and encounters like theirs, have triumphed over the necessities of nature itself and have overcome tyranny."[13] He wrote a second time: — "We know that neither exile from your home, nor loss of property, nor violence, nor any other affliction of this sort will disturb you."[14] Chrysostom was right. The feeble woman to whom he wrote was more than a match for her persecutors.

Apparently between the two letters from Chrysostom, Olympias had been recalled to Constantinople. It was to be once more arraigned. The charge related to her not being in communion with Chrysostom's successor. But she was as imperturbable as when previously accused upon the same ground. A heavy fine, followed by a sentence of banishment, was borne with her customary fortitude.[15] It was not after having endured so much, that Olympias would yield to oppression.

But her physical vigor was exhausted. It had

[12] Soz., VIII. 24. This was in 404 or 405.
[13] Ep. 6.
[14] Ib. 15.
[15] Soz., VIII. 24.

diminished amidst the austerities of her life as Deaconess, before it was annihilated by the excitements of her trials and exiles. A few years seem to have been passed in weakness. But only of the body. The spirit was as strong as ever, when she died at Nicomedia, near the same time that Marcella departed at Rome.[16]

The two women left noble examples. That liberty of the subject which had gone down in darkness amongst most Christians shone bright with Marcella and Olympias.

[16] Therefore near 410. Niceph. Callistus, XIII. 24. Marcellus was about sixty-five, Olympias about forty-five.

CHAPTER III.

THE CATHOLIC POWER.

"They are called to meet difficulties such as neither we nor our fathers encountered. For these we ought to make large allowances. . . . . No rational man expects that the South can run the same rapid career as the North."

WEBSTER *on The Panama Mission.*

THE commotion excited amongst the Roman Christians was very general. Springing from the same cause, it nevertheless met with so various modifications as to lead to still more various results. The earth was shaken with storms. But one would come as the summer gale, another as the winter tempest. The sky was full of clouds. But one would rise in changing outline, another in settled blackness. So, though the Christians of Rome were everywhere stirred, it was almost everywhere in different manners and towards different ends.

To check such disturbances in former times, had been the office of the Catholic power. It had always been ready to deal with its subjects or with its opponents, with any, in short, whose movements threatened its own stability. But it was with the Romans alone, whether Christian or Heathen, that the Catholic rulers had been wont to deal. Would

they be able to manage the Romans, now that the Northern races had appeared? Would they be able to reach the Northern races themselves? These were vital questions to the Catholic power.

Had the Catholic power been universal, its sway would have appeared less doubtful. But it was far from being the same in all quarters. It had been established in the East by the same body by which it was established in the West. But there had been no man amongst the Eastern, like Siricius amongst the Western Catholics to carry out the declaration of the council at Constantinople. Nor had Siricius found the opportunity to secure his own supremacy over the Eastern Church. There the Catholic power was still unsettled, undetermined. It was in the West alone that it had assumed a definite form.

Accordingly it took a very different part in the West from that which it assumed in the East. Here it was a power in the hands of prelates still struggling against the might of sovereigns and the turbulence of subjects. Its struggles were with classes and individuals already subdued in the West. In the East, the Catholic power was still contending against oppression.

Of this we have a striking illustration in the career of Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople. Thither he had been transferred from Antioch by the ruling minister of the Eastern court.[1] The fame

[1] 397. He was ordained in the following year. Soc., VI. 2 *et seq.* Soz., VIII. 2.

of his eloquence, rather than of his courage, had preceded him. They who called him to entertain them were enraged at the discovery that he had come to rebuke and to reform them. He pointed his censures high. One day, it was a fashion of the courtiers that he condemned. Another day, it was the Empress Eudoxia, the imperious spouse of the helpless Arcadius, whom the Archbishop denounced for her ambition or her intrigue. Entering into any public question, nay, into any public tumult, even when the din was at its height, he would interpose the authority with which he was invested.[2] His conduct was branded as seditious. But there was no other mark to be set upon the demeanor of a prelate struggling against the oppressiveness of the Eastern Empire.

Nor did Chrysostom contend with imperial oppressiveness alone. He evinced the same resolution towards the rulers of the Church which he manifested towards the rulers of the court. A question, already mooted, had been renewed concerning the orthodoxy of Origen. In this Theophilus of Alexandria and Epiphanius of Salamis took the lead. Chrysostom declined to enter into their vindictive measures against the departed and all by whom his soundness of doctrine was maintained. Consequently, the Archbishop himself became an object of animosity. Both Epiphanius and Theophilus hastened to Constantinople, where the latter so

[2] On his defence of Eutropius, see Zos., v. 18; on his relations with Gainas, Theod., v. 32.

availed himself of the hostility in the court towards Chrysostom, as to induce the prelate to withdraw from his see in the sixth year after his ordination.

The apprehensions excited amongst his opponents as well as the cruelties inflicted by them upon his followers recalled Chrysostom from his retirement. His tone was more than ever courageous as he returned to greet his friends and to rebuke his foes. Against his ecclesiastical antagonists, he demanded a council that should decide between him and them. Against his imperial adversaries he proceeded still more boldly. On the erection of a statue to the Empress Eudoxia, amidst the acclamations of the populace, the Archbishop ascended his pulpit to denounce the new Herodias, "still dancing, still demanding the head of John." A new synod was called by the indignant Empress. New scenes of recrimination and violence were followed by the deposition and expulsion of Chrysostom.[3]

Exile and want could not cow the spirit that had shown its strength in the greater trials of prosperity and power. What he had commended to the distracted people at Antioch, what he had urged in behalf of the oppressed Church at Constantinople, that Chrysostom did for himself in his day of affliction.[4] He looked above the evils inflicted on earth

[3] 404. He was banished to Cucusus in Cappadocia. On the controversy with Theophilus and Epiphanius, as well as on the council convened against the Archbishop at Chalcedon, see Soc., VI. 6 *et seq.*, or Soz., VIII. 11 *et seq.* Chrysostom's own narrative is in his Ep. 8 *et seq.*

[4] "Deposition," he had written, "on such grounds, bringeth the Christian no less a crown than doth dominion." De Sac., III. 11. A letter (Ep. 125) to a brother in exile breathes the most undaunted courage.

to the blessings promised in Heaven. It was from his banishment that he wrote, as has been mentioned, to his faithful Olympias.

Still odious to the court and ordered to a more distant place, Chrysostom died on the way thither. With his last breath he glorified God.[5] No one of his generation had spent a life in more devoted service. He had his faults. He shared in the errors of the age. But it may be truly said of him, that he was one of the golden souls, of whom "God," to use his own language, "hath need."[6] Thirty years afterwards, the remains of the exile were brought back to Constantinople. The Emperor Theodosius the Younger, bowing his head upon them, implored forgiveness for the injustice of his father or his father's rulers.[7]

Soon after Chrysostom began to oppose the corruptions of the imperial court, Synesius of Cyrene arrived at Constantinople to ask protection from the government for his native city. The envoy, hitherto a leading member of the Heathen party, was so impressed by the opposition of the Christians or of their Archbishop to the abuses of their rulers, that he became converted. The memory of the scenes which he had witnessed at Constantinople, in contrast with those of his earlier years at Athens and Alexandria, where he studied,[8] or at Cyrene, where

[5] 407. Theod., v. 34. Soz., VIII. 28. "Glory to God for all things!" was his "phrase to be uttered in all circumstances." Ep. 193.

[6] "God hath need," he said, "not of golden vessels, but of golden souls." In Matt. Hom. L.

[7] 438. Soc., VII. 45. Theod., v. 36.

[8] See his own account, Ep. 135. At Alexandria he had studied un-

he dwelt, was one to last Synesius throughout his life.

Ordained some ten years afterwards to the bishopric of Ptolemais on the African coast,[9] Synesius at first refused to accept the office from the Primate of Alexandria, the same who had pursued Chrysostom to the death. "I will not give up the chase," he said, "to see my dogs idle and my bows worm-eaten. Nay," he seems to have added, "if ye call this a mere pretext, I will not put away my wife, as your canon enjoins, or renounce my right to the affections of humanity." He went so far as to allege his belief in doctrines that were accounted heretical at Alexandria. "And to these," he wrote, "I will adhere."[10] After all, however, Synesius consented to be ordained. By submitting to the Alexandrian Primate, he gained the opportunity to combat the imperial governor of the province, against whom the Bishop of Ptolemais waged successful war.[11] With the same ardor he professed his willingness to take the field against the border tribes, from whose incursions his people were continually suffering.[12] For twenty years, Synesius continued to assert the independence which he had learned from Chrysostom. At his distance both from the court of his sovereigns and from the councils of his

der the famous Hypatia, whose barbarous murder by the so-called Christians of that city is one of the foulest blots upon the times. Soc., VII. 15.

[9] 410, or thereabouts. Evag., I. 15.

[10] All from his Ep. 105. "I would rather have died," he says, "than have been ordained." Ep. 11, 57.

[11] Ep. 57, 58, 79.

[12] Ep. 62, 69. De Prov., pp. 119 *et seq.* Catast., pp. 298 *et seq.*

colleagues, the prelate of Ptolemais escaped the persecutions under which the greater prelate of Constantinople had perished.

The influence of Chrysostom reached beyond the clergy to the monks of the East. One of his disciples, Nilus, a native of Ancyra, after having risen to the highest public honors at Constantinople, withdrew to a monastery upon Mount Sinai. There he lived long, urging the necessity of continued activity to every one who sought retirement from the evils of the world.[13] Another follower of Chrysostom was Isidore, the head of a monastery at Pelusium on the Egyptian shore of the Mediterranean. He was still more earnest than Nilus in opposing the inaction of the ordinary monastic life. Without his convent walls, the abbot of Pelusium saw distress and degradation on all sides. "Even from the Church," he exclaims, "have life and virtue departed. . . . . The name of peace is everywhere, the reality nowhere. Indeed the Church is like a woman fallen from her former felicity and retaining only its traces. She hath her cases and her chests; but of her wealth she hath been despoiled, ... and by the fault of those who administer her affairs unlawfully. For some dare to sell, and others to buy the priesthood. Some do what I should not venture, even if I ought to tell. And some say what it is unlawful even to conceive."[14] The greater,

[13] *Τὸ γὰρ ἀμέριμνον . . . . οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμῶν.* Ep., III. 66. So 67, 68. See Ad Magnam, 21, 62; De Monast. Exercit., 21. Nilus died about 450.

[14] Ep., III. 408. His ideas of the priesthood are very exalted. *Ἁπάντων τὸ τιμιώτατον.* Ep., II. 52. *Καὶ ὄνομα καὶ πρᾶγμα Θεῖον ὄν.* II. 125.

thought Isidore, was the necessity of exertion amongst the recluses of the time. "Christ says," he writes, "'I came not to bring peace upon earth but a sword.' Not that He disclaims all peace, but that which is yoked to sin. Elsewhere He says, 'My peace I give to you.' True peace," adds the monk, "is that which is sanctified by righteousness and by piety."[15] Yet this was the period when Simeon Stylites ascended his pillar near Antioch to spend upon its top five-and-thirty years. The reverence which he received throughout all the adjoining countries[16] proves the rarity as well as the inefficiency of precepts like those of Nilus and Isidore.

To complete our sketch of the Catholic power in the East, we should have to narrate its weaknesses and delinquencies. Fortunately, they do not belong to our history. But they are to be borne in mind as mingling with all the exertions of the Eastern Catholics. As with every Isidore and every Nilus there was a Simeon, so with every Synesius and every Chrysostom there was a Theophilus. The darker figures were by far the more numerous.

Westward, meantime, the Catholic power was fulfilling its office in repressing the movements amongst its subjects. The more active the effort of the Western believer, the more strenuously was

[15] Ep., III. 246. "Do not prefer," he says, "peace to truth." III. 284. So IV. 36. Isidore died about 450.

[16] Evag., I. 13, 14; II. 10. Theod., Relig. Hist., 26. He died about 460.

it combated by the ecclesiastical authorities. We must not, however, set down their conduct as sheer oppressiveness. All that they most valued was at stake. The invader was pressing forward against the very foundations on which their Church was reared. It could not but fall, were their own men to undermine the walls from within. The same cause that stirred the Catholic subject to assert his independence determined the Catholic ruler to maintain his supremacy.

But the rising in the West was not directed against the abuses in the Church alone. It was swelled by earnest action against the evils throughout the Empire. Such action as this was naturally encouraged rather than checked by the Catholic power.

Aurelius Prudentius, after having passed through various civil and military offices, was spending his last years in religious avocations. Amongst the signs of his devotions were the poems in which he pleads for the memories and the principles of the Christian faith. One of his appeals was to the reigning Emperor. "Thee I beseech," the poet exclaims, "O most august ruler of these Ausonian realms, thee I beseech to command the cessation of the mournful rites . . . . in which miserable men are sacrificed. Let no one fall in the city simply to make a holiday by his death. . . . . Let the arena be content with its wild beasts, nor claim homicides with bloody weapons as its shows. Then shall Rome, guiltless of crime, and

strong in virtue, be worthy of so great a sovereign while it is consecrated to God!"[17]

The poet was sustained by an auxiliary still more earnest in the cause of the long oppressed gladiators. Telemachus, a monk "from the East," says the historian, perhaps from Illyria, appeared one day in the Roman amphitheatre. Leaping the barriers of the arena, the stranger stood amongst the combatants, endeavoring to restrain them from shedding one another's blood. Apparently, the gladiators paused. For them to be the objects of such humanity was sufficiently wonderful to arrest their attention. The audience seem to have ordered the gladiators to despatch the intruder. But on seeing the monk protected rather than injured by the unfortunate men for whom he had risked his life, the more passionate spectators stoned him from their seats until he was dead. With what fury the games of that day were continued, it is easy to imagine. But when the Emperor Honorius heard of the occurrence, he declared Telemachus a martyr, and ordered the combats of gladiators to cease forever.[18] It was long before the order was everywhere obeyed.[19]

Side by side with such exertions in behalf of

[17] "Te precor, Ausonii dux augustissimi regni,
Et tam triste sacrum jubeas, ut cetera, tolli . . . .
Tu mortes miserorum hominum prohibeto litari.
Nullus in urbe cadat cujus sit pœna voluptas . . . .
Jam solis contenta feris infamis arena,
Nulla cruentata homicidia ludat in armis.
Sit devota Deo, sit tanto principe digna,
Et virtute potens et criminis inscia Roma!"
Cont. Symm., II. 1114 *et seq.*

[18] Theod., v. 26. This was probably towards the end of 403.

[19] Salvian (De Gub. Dei, VI. pp. 186, 187) speaks of gladiatorial shows as still continuing.

those oppressed by the imperial laws were others in behalf of those burdened beneath the ecclesiastical institutions. It was against the latter movements that the Catholic power put forth its measures of repression.

Thirty or forty years before the beginning of the century, a son had been born to the innkeeper of a village at the foot of the Pyrenees.[20] The father called him Vigilantius, a name singularly appropriate to the subsequent career of the child.

Humble as was his birth, the boy seems to have attracted the notice of many eminent personages travelling over the road on which his father's inn was one of the relays.[21] He was still young when Sulpicius Severus, one of the most distinguished Christians in the neighboring Aquitaine, took him into service, at first in some business capacity.[22] So strong an impression did Sulpicius receive concerning the ability and the excellence of Vigilantius, that he was soon advanced to a more confidential station, in which he was probably made the companion of his master's literary labors.

The work on which Sulpicius may have been then engaged, was a biography of Martin, Bishop of Tours. In composing this, the writer was gathering in all the materials to be procured concerning the marvellous incidents in which Martin figured as the worker of miracles and of penances. Such was

[20] Hier., Adv. Vigil., pp. 281, 282. Op., tom. iv. pars ii.

[21] See Dr. Gilly's Vigilantius and his Times, pp. 128 – 132.

[22] Ib., p 133. Paul. Nol., Ep. 5.

the vogue afterwards obtained by the biography, as Sulpicius himself states, that the booksellers at Rome declared it to have had the readiest and the most profitable sale on record.[23] This extraordinarily successful work may be taken as a guage of the superstition which Vigilantius breathed not only in the library of Sulpicius, but also abroad, and in the midst of men.

At length Vigilantius was ordained a Presbyter.[24] Soon afterwards he set out upon a pilgrimage to some of the holy spots then attracting devotees from all quarters. He first proceeded to Nola, with a letter from Sulpicius to Paulinus, then but recently settled in his retirement at that place.[25] The visitor saw all that Paulinus had to display, his honors and sufferings, his penances and devotions, as well as the glories of the shrine and the miracles of the saint in whose service he was engaged. Into all these interests of the illustrious recluse, his countryman entered with so admiring sympathy, that Paulinus, in writing to Sulpicius, speaks of him as "our Vigilantius."[26]

From Nola, the pilgrim appears to have resumed his wanderings towards Palestine. Introduced to Jerome by a letter from Paulinus, Vigilantius became the spectator of the austerities and superstitions in constant operation at Bethlehem.[27] In

[23] Dial., II. 16.

[24] Gennadius (De Vir. Ill., 35) speaks of Vigilantius as having been stationed in the diocese of Barcelona. He may have been ordained there.

[25] It was at the beginning of the year 395. Paul. Nol , Ep. 5.

[26] "Noster Vigilantius." Ep. 5.

[27] He was at Bethlehem in 396. Hier., Ep. 36.

themselves, they were much the same as those which he had apparently approved at Nola. But the spirit of Jerome, intrusive and savage as it was, gave to marvels and sacrifices a very different tone from that communicated by the gentle and retiring Paulinus to his establishment. In some way or other, Vigilantius allowed his feelings towards the system of Jerome to become apparent. It would seem that he ventured to doubt the orthodoxy of the recluse, but whether in relation to the rites or to the doctrines in favor at Bethlehem, is not clearly distinguishable.[28] Whatever form his opposition took, it appears to have been dropped before his departure from Jerome. He wrote to Paulinus of "the holy Presbyter Vigilantius,"[29] as of one with whom his arguments or his menaces had been successful.[30] Vigilantius went on to Alexandria, whence he shortly afterwards returned home.[31]

On the route back, he conversed freely about the errors, particularly on doctrinal points,[32] which he had detected in Jerome. In making these charges, Vigilantius stood on the ground of the stanchest Catholics. But in preferring his objections to the regular observances of the monasteries at Bethlehem, the returning pilgrim promised to become a reformer, such as no Catholics, strictly speaking, would tolerate. Nor was the promise unfulfilled. In the course

[28] Hier., Ep. 36, 37.

[29] "Sanctum Vigilantium Presbyterum." Ep. 49.

[30] "Et testimoniis Scripturarum quasi vinculis . . . volui ligare furiosum." Ep. 37.

[31] In 397 or 398. Hier., Ep. 36, 37.

[32] Connected with the writings of Origen, concerning whose orthodoxy a contest was then going on. Hier., Ep. 36.

of a few years there appeared writings of Vigilantius threatening to shake the system of ecclesiastical centralization to its centre. Amongst the adherents whom he made were many of the prelates around his place of residence.[33] His own Bishop, instead of "dashing him into pieces," as his antagonist worded it, "with an Apostolic rod, a rod of iron," actually acquiesced in his course.[34] In the extremity to which he seemed to be reducing the Catholics of his province, they appealed to the enemy whom he had made at Bethlehem.

Jerome wrote once and again[35] to reject the reforms proposed by the Gaul. Of the worse than bitterness to which the passionate recluse gave vent we need take no account. Our object is to disentangle from the reproaches levelled at the adventurous reformer the threads of his spinning which had excited so vindictive a desire to cut them off. "What need is there," he had written, "that you should not merely honor, but adore with so great reverence that which you worship as you carry it about in your little vessel? . . . . Why should a multitude of tapers be lit while the sun shines? . . . . A great honor, indeed, do men thus give to the most blessed martyrs whom the Lamb in the midst of the throne illumines with

[33] Hier., Adv. Vigil., p. 281. Op., tom. IV. pars II.

[34] "Miror," writes Jerome, "sanctum Episcopum in cujus parochia esse Presbyter dicitur, acquiescere furori ejus: et non virga Apostolica virgaque ferrea confringere vas inutile." Ep. 37.

[35] The thirty-seventh letter to Riparius was written in 404 or 405. The tract Against Vigilantius followed at an interval of about two years.

the full splendor of His majesty! . . . . The souls of the apostles and martyrs cannot come forth from their tombs or show themselves wherever they please. . . . . Nor can the prayer of any one dead for another be heard, since not even the martyrs have been able to obtain vengeance of their blood."[36] Concerning the signs and wonders wrought in the churches of the martyrs, Vigilantius is accused of having said they were "fit only for unbelievers."[37] From idolatry, the reformer turns to asceticism. "If all shut themselves up in solitude, who will there be for our Churches? Who for the men of the world? Who for exhorting sinners to virtue? . . . . Why, for your own sake, do ye seek seclusion? . . . . It is not fighting, but flying. Stand in the line! In arms oppose your foes! And ye will be crowned when ye have conquered!"[38] It touched Jerome to the quick that Vigilantius should have gone on to oppose the custom of sending contributions "for the use of the saints," that is, of the clergy and the monks, "at Jerusalem."[39]

To a Catholic of Jerome's mind the reform of Vigilantius was one unvarying sacrilege. "He hath arisen, this Watcher, or rather this Sleeper," broke out his adversary, to "fight with an unclean spirit against the spirit of Christ. For he says that the sepulchres of martyrs should not be venerated, that

[36] Ap. Hier., Adv. Vigil., pp. 282, 283.

[37] "Eas incredulis prodesse, non credentibus." Ib., ib., p. 285.

[38] Ap. Hier., Adv. Vigil., 288.

[39] Ib., ib., p. 286.

vigils should be abolished,[40] that continence is heresy, that celibacy is the nursery of lust. . . . . In such a man the depraved spirit of Jovinian hath had its resurrection."[41] It was far beyond Jovinian that Vigilantius had gone.

So thought the chiefs of the Catholic power. With less bitterness than their champion had shown, they acted with equal resolution. At their head was Innocent, Bishop of Rome. He had enlisted in the support of Chrysostom, the persecuted prelate of Constantinople. All that could be done to sustain him against his persecutors, both ecclesiastical and civil, was done by the Roman.[42] But the case of Vigilantius aroused no such action, no such sympathy. He was a Presbyter who had risen against the observances and the statutes of his Church. There was nothing for Innocent to do but to declare against so audacious a reformer. This the Bishop did in letters reasserting the law of celibacy to the prelates both of the East and of the West.[43] The signal once given, the outcry became general. Amidst the whirlwind of opposition thus excited Vigilantius disappears.

It is but to make room, however, for a still more adventurous reformer. Some time had passed since the monk Morgan, or Pelagius, repaired to Rome[44] from Britain. His reputation for learning and sanc-

[40] What these were, may be read in Augustine's sad letter, Ep. 22.

[41] Adv. Vigil., ad init.

[42] Conc., tom. III. pp. 62 *et seq.* See Soz., VIII. 26, 28.

[43] Ap. Conc., tom. III. p. 9, to Victricius of Rouen, p. 32, to the Bishops of Macedonia.

[44] "Ubi diutissime vixerat." August., De Pecc. Orig., 24.

tity stood high amongst the leading prelates[45] of the Church, whose doctrines long found in him an ardent and an able defender.[46] Such he would probably have continued, had his lot been cast in gentler times or in remoter places. But at Rome, in that period of oppression, Pelagius was expected to stoop too low beneath the Catholic power.

The liberty, once the unquestioned creation of the law of love, had been overcast. This was not all. It was beginning to be denied that such a liberty had ever existed. Nor was the denial strange. Oppression was almost everywhere triumphant. In the field, the invader stood resistless with the sword which he had drawn for massacre and ruin. In the pulpit and at the council, the prelate wielded the weapons of his ecclesiastical arsenals to bring about depression and terror. Voices from the Catholic strongholds were more loudly proclaiming the necessity of dependence upon the Church through whose precepts and ceremonies alone the Divine Grace was to be obtained.[47] The liberty of the subject, of the individual, was treated as a dream rather than as a reality of the past. Men must wake to the submissiveness which the present demanded.

Pelagius the Briton was an old man.[48] Rest,

[45] "Ut servum Dei dilexeris," writes Augustine to Paulinus of Nola, "novimus." Ep. 186. "Viri, ut audio," says Augustine for himself, "sancti et non parvo profectu Christiani." De Pecc. Mer., III. 1. So Ib., III. 5, and De Gest. Pel., 46.

[46] "Antequam proderetur Hæreticus, scripsit studiosis necessaria, libros tres de fide Trinitatis." Genn., De Ill. Vir., 42.

[47] Cælest., ap. August., De Pecc. Orig., 3.

[48] According to his own statement, if the Commentaries on St. Paul are actually his. Præf., ap. Hier. Opera.

even though it came through subjection, seemed more congenial to his years, than any independence involving him in conflict. But he was young enough to resolve upon the attempt to change the views which weighed him down. In the midst of prelates and preachers maintaining the contrary at Rome, the monk from Britain upheld the power of the individual to save himself from sin and to perfect himself in virtue.[49] "It is God's law," he solemnly asseverated, "that His rational creature should be endowed with the ability to choose the good in freedom of will. . . . . I do by no means argue," he adds, "that the nature of man is incapable of doing evil. On the contrary I declare it to be capable both of evil and of good. All I would deny as an injustice is the doctrine that of ourselves, by our own necessities, we are impelled to evil."[50] Wherever the idea thus expressed may have had its origin,[51] and whatever the development to which it might henceforth attain,[52] it was with Pelagius a declaration of independence against the whole forces of centralization.

[49] He began about the year 405, according to the inference from his Libell. Fid. Ad Innocentium. Also, ap. August., De Gratia Christi, 38.

[50] "Volens namque Deus rationabilem creaturam voluntarii boni munere et liberi arbitrii potestate donare. . . . . Neque vero nos ita defendimus naturæ bonum, ut eam dicamus malum non posse facere, quam utique boni ac mali capacem etiam profitemur. Sed ab hac eam tantummodo injuria vindicamus, ne ejus vitio ad malum videamur impelli." Ad Demetriad., 3, 8.

[51] Marius Mercator ascribes it to Eastern sources. Commonitorium, ap. Aug., Op., Tom. x. p. 2290. We may look back as far as to Origen. See Hier., Ep. 43, p. 477.

[52] I omit all notice of the subsidiary doctrines. See August., De Pecc. Mer. et Remiss., and the authorities in the appendix to the tenth volume of Augustine's works.

Such the Catholic rulers doubtless regarded it. But the opposition excited against Pelagius took for its key-note the assertion that he was denying the grace of God in denying the authority of the Catholic Church. On the other hand, the assertions of Pelagius were comprehended by those as weary as himself of prostration. A few attached themselves to the daring reformer. Foremost amongst these first adherents, was the monk, Cælestius, younger than his master, but all the more zealous to sustain the doctrine which opened a way to liberty. He, too, appears to have been of British origin.[53]

Together they stood, the young man and the old, arrayed against their rulers. From the land just then about to be liberated from the imperial yoke, they brought their offers of deliverance to those upon whom the Catholic yoke pressed heavily. But their brethren of the South were faint-hearted. Only the prelates and the polemics of the Church gave them a greeting. And that was to denounce the courageous strangers.

Several years, however, elapsed before the number either of his adherents or of his opponents rendered the Roman residence of Pelagius untenable. In company with Cælestius, he then crossed over to Africa. But rejected at Rome, they were sure of being rejected at Carthage. Pelagius soon went on farther. Cælestius, perhaps more ardent in his hopes of success, remained at Carthage. But he was soon

[53] Jerome seems to allude to him as being of Scotch origin. In Jerem. Lib. III., Prol. Op., tom. III. p. 586. Marius Mercator (Comm., p. 2291,) speaks of Cælestius as "nobilis natu."

involved in difficulties, leading to his excommunication by a Carthaginian council. After vainly endeavoring to obtain protection from the Roman Bishop, Cælestius made his escape to Ephesus.[54]

Pelagius had reached Palestine. There, in the midst of men less fearful of indulging in doctrinal speculations than the Western Catholics, he might have had some expectation of being heard. The associations of the land befriended him. He was where the Saviour had lived and suffered. It must have seemed as if the light of the past would shine upon him as he pleaded for the liberty which Christ had assured. But close behind the fugitive there came a messenger from the great African Bishop, Augustine. The envoy, Orosius, bore the charge of stirring up the Eastern prelates against Cælestius and Pelagius.

Orosius gives an account of the council convened at Jerusalem by John, the Bishop of that city. Pelagius, hearing himself accused on the authority of Augustine, asks, "And what has Augustine to do with me?" Orosius cannot repress his indignation. But the presiding Bishop replies, "I am here for Augustine." The charge is then adduced. "He teaches," says Orosius, "that man can live sinless and easily obey, if he will, the commandments of God." "I cannot deny," answers the accused, "that I have taught this and that I still teach it." The prosecutor grows warm. "This, then, hath been

[54] 411, 412. Mar. Merc., Comm. Libell., p. 2355. All ap. August., Aliud, p. 2299. Lib. sub. tit. Op., tom. x. Prædest., p. 2291. Paul. Diac.,

condemned by the synod of Africa. This hath Augustine rejected. This hath Jerome confuted." Bishop John is again obliged to interfere. But it is soon announced that "messengers and letters shall be sent to the holy Innocent of Rome, pledging us to abide by his decrees."[55] As he had already repelled Pelagius, the decision of the council at Jerusalem was equivalent to a condemnation of the reformer.

Yet there seems to have been a lurking feeling in favor of Pelagius amongst his brethren of the East. Or he may have found it possible to make concessions to them which he could not have made to the severer prelates of the West. At all events, a second council, held some months later, declared Pelagius blameless.[56] It must have been amid circumstances that stripped the declaration of all its encouragement to him. Nowhere had he found a more determined antagonist than now took the field in the person of Jerome. "My brain is on fire," wrote the wrangler of Bethlehem, "nor can I control my language."[57] So, in truth, it seemed.[58] But his vehemence kindled fierce resentment amongst those supporting Pelagius. It is said that they made an attack upon the monastery, at Bethlehem.[59] It was a fearful method of silencing a foe or of

[55] 415. Oros, Apol. Cont. Pelagium.

[56] See Wigger's work, Augustinismus und Pelagianismus, translated by Prof. Emerson, ch. 10.

[57] Ep. 43.

[58] See the three Libri Dial. adv. Pelagium.

[59] August., De Gest. Pel., 66. Innocent., Ep. ap. Aug., Op., tom. x. pp. 2334, 2335.

encouraging a friend. Pelagius must have felt himself doomed.

Still graver encounters awaited him. To the head of the power which he had virtually denied, appeal had been made from the East. It was made from the West by councils held in Africa immediately after those in Palestine.[60] Four Bishops united with Augustine in supporting the appeals by a letter to the Roman Bishop, stating that "the question was no longer confined to Pelagius, but to a multitude of reformers."[61] At the same time, they present the new charge brought by the Catholics against the doctrine of Pelagius. "He says," write the African prelates, "that the nature of man is free, in order to prevent the desire of a Redeemer — that it is secure of salvation, in order to prove a Saviour superfluous."[62] To these appeals Bishop Innocent soon issued his reply. "By the authority of our apostolic power, we do adjudge Pelagius and Cælestius to be deprived of our ecclesiastical communion."[63] It was but carrying out the determination that had long been formed and expressed at Rome.

Within a month or two, Innocent was succeeded by Zosimus. Of Eastern birth,[64] the new Bishop may have been inclined to tolerate the doctrine condemned by his predecessor. However this may be, Cælestius, driven from Ephesus and from Constantinople, came to Rome in the hope of protection at

[60] Ap. August., Ep. 175, 176.
[61] Ib., Ep. 177.
[62] "Qui naturam humanam ideo dicunt liberam, ne quærant Liberatorem; ideo salvam, ut superfluum judicent Salvatorem." Ib., ib.
[63] 417. Ap. August., Ep. 182. So Ep. 181, 183.
[64] A Greek. Anast., De Vit. Rom. Pont., 42.

the hands of Zosimus. His representations proved so effectual, that the Bishop wrote to Africa, declaring the innocence of Cælestius and rebuking the persecuting spirit from which he had suffered in that province.[65]

This promised well to Pelagius. He had already forwarded a statement of his doctrine to Innocent, at the time of the appeal to that prelate against him. The communication arrived after the accession of Zosimus. To him it appeared satisfactory and conclusive. A new convocation of the Roman clergy was followed by a new despatch to the African Church. The orthodoxy of Pelagius was solemnly affirmed.[66]

But at what cost to him! His address to the Roman Bishop had not only renewed the declaration previously made, that "no will could be so free as not to need assistance from God."[67] But the hitherto undaunted reformer had timidly added:—"If I have taken my position too ignorantly or too hastily, I desire to be corrected by thee who dost hold both the see and the faith of Peter."[68] It is but another proof of the obstacles to the attainment of aught like liberty in that submissive age. Yet it is a stronger proof than any heretofore appearing. The reformer urges a great principle in opposition to the Catholic power. But after no very protracted exertion, he submits to the power which he had

[65] Ap. August., tom. x. p. 2347.
[66] Ib., ib. p. 2350.
[67] "Liberum hic confitemur arbitrium ut dicamus nos indigere Dei semper auxilio." Libell Fid., 13.
[68] Libell. Fid., 14. Ap. August., tom. x. pp. 2343–2346.

opposed, at the cost of principle and of independence.

It was on the African shore that independence, so far as related to the Roman power, seemed to be upheld. While Innocent held his bishopric, a council of African prelates had forbidden appeals "to transmarine parts."[69] The spirit thus shown was again evinced towards Zosimus. His proclamations in favor of Pelagius and Cælestius were received in Africa with defiance. A synod, more numerous and more excited than any preceding, was held at Carthage. Instead of abiding by the sentence of the Roman, the members of the council renewed their sentence against Pelagius and Cælestius.[70]

It was only with regard to the see of Rome, that the African Catholics could assert their independence. To maintain themselves they invoked the imperial authority. "Sacred rescripts," as they were called, banished Pelagius and all his partisans.[71] Thus supported, two hundred and twenty-four of the African prelates assembled at Carthage to reissue their fulminations against the overthrown reformers.[72] The African Church had triumphed.

But at what cost to its members! Let it be set aside that they had been battling against the liberty of the individual. Let it be passed over that they had been maintaining the Catholic power in its most oppressive form. It is enough to see them leaning

[69] I. Conc. Mil., Can. 22, ap. Conc., tom. III. p. 385.
[70] Prosper., Cont. Collat., 15.
[71] Ap. August., tom. x. p. 2358.
[72] Ib., ib. p. 2361.

on the imperial interposition. The dependence of an earlier generation was thus renewed.

Meantime, the Bishop Zosimus had been in a sad state of perplexity. When the first synod refused to accept his sentence, he wavered.[73] The resistance at Rome contributed to shake his resolution.[74] But when the great council meeting under the imperial protection had more decisively pronounced against the reformers, the Bishop of Rome broke down. A so-called Tractate came forth, unreservedly condemning what he had favored only the year before.[75]

The reform was soon suppressed in Rome and the adjoining realms. All who refused adhesion to the Tractate were driven from Italy.[76] Even they who harbored the condemned were pronounced liable to the same penalty.[77] Pelagius found refuge, perhaps in his native island, perhaps only in the grave. Cælestius, again venturing to Rome, was again banished.[78] His life, like that of other prominent associates of Pelagius, ended in alarms.

Of those supporting the Catholic power through the recent controversies, the master-spirit was Augustine. Fifteen years had passed since his ordination, when the monk from Rome landed in Africa. Up to that time the Bishop of Hippo had been engaged in the various questions agitating the African Church. All that he with his ardent passions thought

[73] Ep. ap. August., tom. x. p. 2357.

[74] Prosper., Chron., Ad. Ann. 418.

[75] Now, 418. Prosper., Cont. Collat., 15; Mar. Merc., Comm. Aliud, p. 2302

[76] Id., ib., pp. 2302, 2374 *et seq.*

[77] Ap. August., Ep. 201.

[78] Prosper., Cont. Collat., 58.

serviceable to the cause espoused by him, he had employed. If it was a sentence of a council that promised success against the foe, Augustine had it passed. If it had been an edict from the imperial tribunal that he wanted, he would have availed himself of it with equal readiness.[79] Prepared to use any means then considered lawful, trained to contention, and with a nature of itself prone to strife, Augustine stood fiery and resolved upon the soil which Pelagius sought in flight.

The fugitive had no chance with the prelate. At first in sermons,[80] then in letters and in lengthy treatises, in public bodies and in private deliberations, the purpose of Augustine to uphold the Catholic power assumed its full proportions. To defend this, was to defend the power on which the doubting visionary and the uncontrolled debauchee, Augustine himself, had relied for conversion. To defend the Catholic doctrine against that which Pelagius urged, was still more natural with Augustine. He who had been so polluted, so sinful in his early years, could not but believe in the dependence of the individual on human grace as well as on that which was Divine. Not even on the Church alone had Augustine depended. He had leaned upon his mother before he learned to lean upon the Church. Could he bear with the plea of Pelagius that every

[79] See especially, his ninety-third letter: — "Terror temporalium potestatum quando veritatem oppugnat," is one thing; "quando autem veritatem prædicat," is quite another. So Op. Imperf. Cont. Jul., I. 10.

[80] Serm., 170, 174, 175, 176, and Retract., II. 33.

man had his inherent capability of being virtuous? It might be arguing the right of every one to liberty. But it was against the whole experience of Augustine.

But if Augustine combated for authority, he could also combat for liberty. He had a spirit in which progressive as well as conservative elements were perpetually at work. To turn against the assailants of the Catholic power was hardly more frequent with him than to lead its supporters out from its narrow boundaries. "This is liberty," he wrote, "when we are subject to truth."[81] He would have had the Catholic power prove itself true by its influence upon men. "When we have an army," he writes, "such as Christ's law requires, when we have subjects, husbands, wives, parents, sons, masters, slaves, kings, judges, tax-payers, tax-gatherers, such as Christ's law demands, then none can doubt the blessings wrought by our Christianity."[82] No one could have expressed clearer views of the laws by which nations and ages advanced in a continual progress under an Eternal Providence. "I determined to write it," says Augustine in reference to his great work, the City of God, "against the blasphemies ascribing the irruption of Alaric and the overthrow of Rome to the Christian religion. . . . . The first books refute the opinion that human affairs were so prosperous of old as to have met with their

[81] "Hæc est libertas nostra, cum isti subdimur veritati." De Lib. Arb., II. 37.

So Prosper of Aquitaine: —

"Libertas nulla est melior, majorve potestas,
Quam servire Deo, Cui bene servit amor." *Epig.*, 40.

[82] Ep. 138.

present reversions in consequence of our having abjured the Heathen deities. . . . . Then I go on to describe the origin, the rise, and the appointed end of the two cities, whereof the one is of God, and the other of this world." [83] How vividly he depicts the doom of the latter, how heartfully he foretells the glory of the former, must be seen in his own pages. [84]

All that Augustine thought most sacred seemed to him to depend upon the system assailed by the Western reformers. He could not but oppose them. Nor was it merely for the Catholic power that he did so. It was for the majesty of God. "For if," he writes, "God hath made thee a man, and thou hast made thyself a good man; then what thou hast made is the better. Do not extol thyself above God. Submit thyself to Him; adore Him; worship Him; confess Him who made thee. No one re-creates but Him who creates. No one re-makes but Him who makes." [85] This was, as it were, his final plea against Pelagius. Vainly would Pelagius answer that he held no such doctrine as was imputed to him. Augustine would reiterate his plea. Whatever was denied to the Catholic power, was, in his eyes, denied to Him by whom the Catholic power professed to be constituted.

[83] Retract., II. 43.

[84] Quanta erit illa felicitas, ubi nullum erit malum, nullum latebit bonum, vacabitur Dei laudibus, qui erit omnia in omnibus . . . . Vera ibi gloria erit, ubi laudantis nec errore quisquam nec adulatione laudabitur. Verus honor, qui nulli negabitur digno, nulli deferetur indigno . . . . Vera pax, ubi nihil adversi nec a se ipso nec ab alio quisquam patietur." Civ. Dei, XXII. 30.

[85] Serm. 176.

The reformers were hewn down. But the felling of such trees, as the old writer would have it, left space for the increase of much underwood. The reformation spread far in various forms. No questions of equal interest or prevalence were started in Gaul during many subsequent years. All the ability, all the piety of the leading Christians in the province were enlisted on one side or another of the contest between predestination and free-will. Still higher ran the excitement in Britain. The countrymen of Pelagius flocked about the banner which he had left to them. To such an extent did the feeling in his favor spread, that the Catholics of the island found it advisable to send over to the continent for champions. Germain, the famous Bishop of Auxerre, twice crossed the channel as an envoy from Rome to oppose the progress of the Pelagian doctrine.[86] To succeed, he was obliged to employ every engine of superstition that he could command. Miracles by land and by sea, in the secluded homes and on the open battle-fields of Britain, carried the day.[87] The few who refused to yield were transported to the continent, "that the island might be rid of them," says the ecclesiastical historian, "and that they might be rescued from their perversions."[88] Not yet would the Catholic power loosen its hold upon Britain.

But the same province that was the first to be separated from the imperial centralization, was also the

[86] Prosper, Chron., Ad Ann. 430. The first visit was in 429, 430; the second in 446, 447.

[87] Bede, I. 17 *et seq.*

[88] Id., I. 21.

first to be separated from the Catholic. The Christians of Britain, though included amongst the Western Catholics, as if they had resembled the rest, were actually of a different stamp. Deriving their early doctrines from the Asian Christians, the British Catholics had always preserved their ecclesiastical or doctrinal relationship to their mother-communities. It was from the East that Pelagius was said to have drawn his doctrines. It was in the East that he seems to have awakened a momentary sympathy. With the principles of the Eastern Catholics, that is, of the Eastern Catholics as they had been, the followers of Pelagius could not but continue to agree rather than with those of the Western Catholics. Submit as they might to the power established in the West, the Catholics of Britain preserved the desire, if not the possession of independence.

A voice from amongst them may still be heard appealing for greater liberty in doctrine and in discipline. "It is vain," says the Briton Fastidius,[89] "to take the name of Christ, unless we imitate Him."[90] "Yet God," he pleads, "doth not strike you down, that you may know how great is His love, how great His clemency towards you.....You have wished to die in sin. He wishes you to live in conversion."[91] "God," exclaims Fastidius, "hath desired His people to be holy..... He hath wished them to be such, so just, so pious, so pure, so stain-

[89] Perhaps a Bishop. See Admonit. in Lib. De Vit. Christ., ap. August. Op., tom. x., p. 1501, ed. Paris. alt.

[90] De Vit. Christ., cap. i.

[91] Ib., ii.

less, so simple, that the Heathen should see in them nothing to be blamed, but rather everything to be admired." [92] "He, therefore," concludes the Briton, "he is a Christian .... whose mind is all in God, whose life is all in Christ." [93] The clamor of the Catholics for form, for severity, for power, has not so clear, so true a sound as this appeal from Britain.

There were some in the East to espouse the same cause. One, of whom nothing is known besides his name and title, speaks as if he had at heart the defence of the fallen Pelagius. Sympathy with his position is very evident in the tone with which Nemesius, Bishop of Emesa in Syria, discourses upon human nature. "Knowing the nobleness," he says, "that belongs to us as creatures of Heaven, let us not disgrace our nature by proving ourselves unworthy of such endowments..... For as to vice and virtue, we are able to direct our own action." [94] Thus does the Syrian unite with the Briton in pleading for the liberty of the individual.

The Catholic power in the East had assumed no such attitude as that maintained by the same power in the West. The prelates of the Eastern sees occupied a totally different position from that of their Western colleagues. These were obliged to check the independence of their inferiors. Those, the Eastern prelates, were obliged to resist the tendency of their inferiors to subjection. While many of the prelates in the East consulted only their own advantage, others labored for the animation and the enlighten-

[92] De Vit. Christ., cap. IX.
[93] Ib., XIV.
[94] De Nat. Hom., 1, 40, ed. Oxon.

ment of those beneath them. A noble portrait is sketched of Atticus the Primate of Constantinople, where he is represented as having been unwearied in ministering to the wants, bodily and spiritual, of his people. To rescue them from the same errors as those combated by the reformers of the West, was one of the points with the wise Primate of Constantinople. Learning that many were in the habit of worshipping at the tomb of a deceased Christian, Atticus sent by night to remove the remains beyond the reach of the worshippers. The haste which he made, in the words of the historian, to cut out these superstitions appears to have succeeded.[95]

But the Catholic power in the East could not always sustain itself against oppression. The most oppressive authority with which the better prelates were obliged to contend was that of their colleagues, prelates, as well as they, and ministers of the Catholic power. The expulsion of Chrysostom by his adversaries proved the forerunner of other transactions still more decisive with regard to the supremacy of the turbulent over the peaceful, of the lordly over the humble, of those content to be powerful over those aspiring to be free. A little more than a quarter of a century after Chrysostom's deposition, much the same fate befel his successor Nestorius. A dispute arose between the Constantinopolitan and some of his colleagues, at the head of whom was Cyril, the nephew and the successor of Chrysostom's antagonist, Theophilus, Primate of Alexandria. The controversy turned partly on the Pelagian reformation, which Nestorius

[95] Soc., VII. 25.

was inclined to support, but chiefly upon questions relating to the nature of Christ and His conception by the Virgin Mary.[96] An appeal to Rome in behalf of the doctrines which he accounted Catholic was made by Cyril.[97] Answer was returned that the Roman see not only took the same side with him, but also committed to him the charge of reducing Nestorius to submission.[98] The fiery Alexandrian soon issued his anathemas.[99] Nestorius, without the independence of his great predecessor, at once endeavored to compromise the controverted points of doctrine. But a council was called at Ephesus, where sentence of deposition was pronounced against the Archbishop of Constantinople at the instance of the Archbishop of Alexandria.[100] Again the prelate yielded to the prelate in the East. Nor was it without renewed interposition from the imperial power.[101]

Such being the weakness of the Catholic power in the East, its strength in the West was all the more essential to the interests of the age. We cannot shut our eyes to the sacrifices by which it was maintained. Yet we may believe that such sacrifices would not have been permitted but for the good which was to be wrought only by the Catholic power.[102]

[96] Soc., VII. 32, and Gieseler's citations from Nestorius's Sermons, Man. Eccl. Hist., § 88, note 15.

[97] Ap. Conc., tom. III. pp. 552 *et seq.*

[98] Ib., tom. III. p. 903.

[99] Cyr. Alex., Adv. Nest., Expl. XII. Capp. Apol. pro. XII. Capp. adv. Orient. Episc. See Conc., tom. III. pp. 586 *et seq.*

[100] 431. Soc., VII. 34. Liberatus, Brev. Caus. Nest. et Eutych., capp. 4, 5. Ap. Conc., tom. VI.

[101] On the subsequent fate of Nestorius, see his own account, Evag., I. 7.

[102] Jerome died in 420. Prosper., Chron., Ad Ann. Paulinus and Augustine in 431. Uranius, ap. Paul. Vit., 53; Possid., Vit. August., 40.

CHAPTER IV.

PERSECUTORS.

"Venido es á Moros, exido es de Christianos."
Poema del Cid.

Only an indistinct view of the movements just related had been caught by the invaders. They could not see into the motives either of the reforming or of the repressing, of the dominant or of the struggling Catholics, so as to understand them. The impression that might have been made by the attitude of the generous leader or by that of the imperious ruler, in case either had been distinctly perceived, was lost upon the Northern Christians.

The effect actually produced upon them by the Romans came from a view of the masses, Christian and Heathen, and of these alone. Here the strangers found a population so reckless of all higher interests as to "care for nothing," says the Christian historian, "provided they were not deprived of the circus."[1] There they were greeted by multitudes so

[1] "Si reciperet Circum, nihil esse sibi factum." Oros., I. 6. So at a later time. Salv., De Gub. Dei, VI. p. 221.

forgetful of all earlier associations as to "prefer," says the same narrator, "the liberty of dependents amongst the barbarians to their misery as subjects amongst the Romans."[2] What other feeling besides contempt could be excited in the invaders? They had come prepared for resistance and for battle. It was not in one case out of ten that they met with aught but helplessness and submission. Degradation, universal and unmitigated, was all that presented itself to the sweeping hosts from the North.[3]

Devastation seemed to go with them. They wore to the Romans the look of foes becoming more and more formidable, more and more destructive. It appeared as if there was nothing else to do but to submit to the workers of so much ruin. That they came fatal to the Roman centralization was universally recognized. But not for this were they regarded as the avengers of those upon whom the yoke had been imposed. They were rather viewed as the chastisers of those who had tamely submitted to the burdens of centralization. How else could the invaders lay low the Empire, but by slaughtering its subjects as well as its defenders?

The instances of anything like mansuetude on the part of the invaders are rare enough to be enumerated in full. The Catholic, delighted at the profession of his faith by the Burgundians, declares

[2] "Ut inveniantur jam inter eos quidam Romani qui malint inter barbaros pauperem libertatem, quam inter Romanos tributariam sollicitudinem sustinere." Oros., VII. 41. So Isid., Chron. Got., p. 206.

[3] "El mundo," says Donoso Cortés on La Ley Electoral, "estaba entonces dividido entre la barbarie y la degradacion."

them "to be living gently, mildly, and innocently, as if indeed those whom they conquered were their Christian brethren."[4] This accords but ill with the accounts of marches, battles and sanguinary deeds in which the Burgundians are elsewhere seen to be engaged. "Yet those," pursues the writer already cited, "who might slay all, and carry all things off, demand only a trifle for the labors undertaken by them. . . . . Execrating their swords, they have turned them into ploughshares, while such Romans as survive are treated as equals and as friends. . . . . If the barbarians had been allowed to break into the Roman territories only for this, that the Church of Christ throughout the East and the West should be filled with Huns and Sueves, with Vandals and Burgundians, as well as with diverse and innumerable races of believers, the mercy of God would seem worthy of being lauded and extolled. For though it may be at our cost that so many nations have obtained knowledge of the truth, yet so only may it have been possible for them to be converted."[5] It was generous in the Roman thus to offer himself and his race a sacrifice for the good of others. But to believe that the invaders were coming at once to fill the churches of Christ must have been difficult for the Catholic or for the Roman, conquered, oppressed and overwhelmed.

Onward the Northern warriors pressed. To the north, an open field had been left for the conflicts

[4] Oros., VII. 32.

[5] "Quandoquidem etsi cum labefactione nostri tantæ gentes agnitionem veritatis acciperent, quam invenire utique nisi hac occasione non possent." Id., VII. 41.

of the Pict and the Saxon in Britain. In the centre of the Western territory, the Franks, the Burgundians and the Visigoths were increasing their hold upon Gaul. Southwards, the province of Spain was but nominally protected against the Visigoths and the Vandals. The latter nation was soon engaged in spreading wide the havoc begun by the former.

All the defence obtained by the imperial power in these disordered realms was due to Aëtius, commanding the Northern mercenaries of the Empire.[6] As North had been matched against North, when Stilicho met Alaric in Italy, so was it again under the banners of the combatants in Gaul. But if this province owed its protection to the arms of Aëtius, other provinces owed their desolation to his intrigues. The defender also proved the destroyer. The governor of Africa, Bonifacius, for many years the rival of Aëtius at the Western court, fell into the snares of his unscrupulous competitor.[7] Believing himself in danger of disgrace and death, Bonifacius summoned the Vandal chieftain, Genseric, from Spain.[8] The success of Aëtius's schemes that had led to this desperate step on the part of Bonifacius deprived the imperial government of its hold upon almost all its Western dominions.

The Spanish province became the prey of the Visigoths on the departure of the Vandals.[9] These,

[6] He was of Scythian origin. Ren. Frigeridus, ap. Greg. Tur., II. 8. On his victories, see Jorn., De Reb. Get., 34; Merobaudes, Paneg. Reliq., pp. 7 *et seq.* ed. Nieb.; and the ancient Chronicles.

[7] Proc., Bell. Vand., I. 3.

[8] 429. Id., ib. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 33. Victor Vit., De Pers. Vand., I. ad init.

[9] Proc., Bell. Vand., I. 3.

reaching the African shore, gained victory after victory. But there was no occasion for them to hasten the conquest of the province. It was theirs, long before they actually took possession of its great city Carthage.[10] Africa and Spain were both lost to the Empire.

It is not for us to follow either the conquering or the conquered through the terrors accompanying the events narrated. But from the scenes occurring in Africa the veil must be lifted sufficiently to disclose the invaders as they became persecutors. The Vandal Genseric, like Alaric the Visigoth, was a professed Arian. But the nature of the Vandal was not only much more superstitious; it was also much more ferocious than that of the Visigoth. Moreover, he entered a province far more distracted by religious controversies than those which Alaric invaded. Nowhere had the dominant Catholics excited so general or so vindictive a hostility by their oppressive measures as in Africa. Many of their antagonists, ready to catch at any opportunity of revenge, joined themselves to Genseric. Inflamed by their passions as well as by his own, he ordered the persecution of the Catholics throughout the African territories.

Fearful proved the consequences. Side by side, the invader and the provincial, the Heathen and the Heretic, opened their charge upon their common adversaries. The Donatist and the Manichean, the Jew and the Heathen of the province kept pace

[10] Proc., Bell. Vand., i. 4. Vict. Vit., De Pers. Vand., i. ad init. Prosper., Chron., Ad Ann. 436, 440.

with the Arian from the North in the pursuit of the Catholics of Africa. Shrines and churches were demolished. Laymen and clergymen were enslaved, exiled or slain. To a deputation of the survivors, imploring mercy, Genseric replied that he had determined to spare none of their name and race.[11] "The very breath," says the Catholic in describing the suffering of his fellow-believers, "was taken from us in the midst of the Vandals."[12]

Whence was protection to be sought? Not from the imperial power. Unable to repel the invader, it could not stay the persecutor. In the hands of women, both in the East[13] and in the West,[14] the government was too weak to defend itself, much more its subjects. If it found a general, like Aëtius, if it found troops like those under his command, it was even more at their mercy than at that of its foes.

Was it the Catholic power that would protect the persecuted? To them it might not have seemed so. The sufferings of those over whom that power extended were not confined to any single province. The Catholic of Gaul laments over agonies as keen

[11] Vict Vit., De Pers. Vand., I. p. 417, ed De la Bigne.

[12] "Ut in medio Vandalorum nostri nullatenus respirarent, neque usquam orandi aut immolandi concederetur gementibus locus." Id., ib. Compare the account of the luxuries into which the Vandals plunged. Proc., Bell. Vand., II. 6. All this was from about 430 onwards.

[13] Pulcheria, already mentioned as the sister and regent of Theodosius the Younger. The great achievement of the regency was the compilation of the Theodosian Code, 429, 435–438. Novell. Theod., tit. I., ed. Hänel.

[14] Placidia, the sister of Honorius, and upon his death (423) regent for Valentinian, her son by her second husband Constantius. Olymp., pp. 464, 468, 470. On the attempt of Joannes to succeed Honorius, see Id., pp. 468, 471. Philost., XII. 13, 14.

as those of his brethren in Africa.[15] Nor were the Western invaders the only persecutors. The Christians in Persia, again attacked, barely escaped extermination.[16] It was as if the age of martyrs had revived.[17] Could relief come from the Catholic power? There was hope.

Against this very crisis had the Catholic power prepared itself. The oppression practised by its ministers in their day of dominion had preserved a system that could resist the day of fall. The superstition recently defended against Vigilantius remained to check the persecutors as well as to sustain the persecuted. The liberty lately denied to Pelagius could be again denied to the Heretic and to the warrior.[18] The Catholic power was gravely threatened. But it was not overthrown.

[15] See the Eucharisticon of Paulinus Pellæus, the grandson of Ausonius, who can discern no means of safety but in a life of exile or of monasticism. Ap. Coll. Pisaur., tom. VI. pp. 1–5.

[16] 418–422, according to Assemanni, Mart. Orient. et Occident., tom. I. pp. 231 *et seq.* Theod., v. 39. Soc., VII. 18 *et seq.*

[17] "Niun Secolo," exclaims Emanuel Tesauro in his Regno d'Italia sotto i Barbari, "fu mai più benemerito dell' Inferno ne del Paradiso; avendo empiuto l'uno di Carnefici e l'altro di Martiri."

[18] "Qu' eût servi le sec rationalisme des Pelagiens à l'approche de l'invasion Germanique? Ce n'était pas cette fière théorie de la liberté qu'il fallait prêcher aux conquérans de l'Empire, mais la dependance de l'homme." Michelet, Hist. de France, tom. I. p. 123.

CHAPTER V.

LEO OF ROME.

"Ut eterni templi ædificatio . . . . in Petri soliditate consisteret." — Leo, *Ep.* x.

Had the Catholic power fallen, much more than its mere oppressiveness would have been subverted. All the principles of liberty that had been wrought out, however painfully or interruptedly, would have been in danger of being likewise demolished. The Northern Christians could not yet be said to be in possession of the freedom springing from their nominal religion. Glimpses of it might reach a few, but to the greater number it was invisible. The liberty of the mass was not that of the worshipper and the subject, but that of the ruler and the warrior.[1] Had it prevailed to the annihilation of the liberty, imperfect as this was, in the possession of the Roman Christians, all humanity would have been the sufferer.

It was not to be desired that the Catholic power

[1] "Liberty . . . .
To thee, O Fire! O Pestilence! O Sword!
Till Vengeance hath her fill!" Coleridge.

should endure so far as it was a system of centralization. But so far as it was a system of union, securing what can thus only be secured, its existence was universally desirable. Men needed to be restrained that they might be liberated. They required to be kept together that they might be developed. Should each one carry out his own style of doctrine, there would be no development. It would be but incoherent antagonism. Should each one have his own way of discipline, there would be no liberation. It would be but clashing isolation. The want of an authority strong enough to maintain itself and generous enough to act for others, was the one great want of the age.

A contemporary treatise bears the title of an Admonition concerning the Antiquity and the Universality of the Catholic Faith. It announces the unchanging supremacy of the traditions established by the faith and of the institutions supported by the traditions. If these require expansion, they receive it, proclaims the writer of the treatise. But if their subjects claim room for themselves, there can be no right, no hope of progress for them except as subjects, as members of the Church Universal.[2] This warning comes from no ruler intent upon preserving his dominion. It is from a subject, a simple Presbyter, Vincentius, attached to a convent on the island of Lerina, off the southern coast of Gaul.

The want expressed by Vincentius and felt by

[2] Comm., 28.

thousands around him, could not be entirely gratified. No human want can be. Had an authority, or an individual in authority, appeared firm and yet always considerate, always employed for its subjects rather than for its possessor or its possessors, too much would have been given to that generation. But it obtained a great deal in the authority upreared by Leo of Rome.

He was of Italian, possibly of Roman birth. The accounts purporting to follow him through his youth and opening manhood are untrustworthy. But it may be gathered that he not only entered the priesthood, but rose to great distinction in its ranks at an early age. He is supposed to have possessed the especial favor of the successive Bishops above him. So great was his apparent or actual influence with them, that some of their most authoritative acts were ascribed to his counsels.[3] He was evidently on the road to power. Nor did this appear merely in the ecclesiastical world. When the quarrels of the imperial general Aëtius were interrupting his campaigns in Gaul, Leo was chosen as the most suitable envoy to allay the passions of the restless commander. The effect of the mission is not related.[4] But that Leo should have been selected for the office indicates his rising reputation at the court as well as in the Church of the Western Empire.[5]

On setting out for Gaul, Leo was but a Dea-

[3] Prosper., Chron., Ad Ann. 440.
[4] Id., ib., Ad Ann. 441.
[5] 441. Id., ib.

con. He returned the Bishop elect of Rome. "It is right," he says in his first discourse to his people, "for a consecrated pontiff to begin his office with sacrifices to the glory of the Lord . . . . I therefore thank, and always shall thank our God for all that He hath bestowed upon me. I acknowledge at the same time, with merited gratitude, the results of your favor towards me. For I plainly perceive how much reverence, affection and fidelity are promised in these sentiments of attachment on your part. And it is my desire to use all pastoral solicitude in procuring the salvation of your souls, O ye who have had so exalted an opinion concerning me, though no deserts of mine were to be perceived."[6]

A year after, on the anniversary of his elevation, the Bishop resumes the thread of his previous address. "This day hath the Divine condescension made a day of honor to me, since it hath raised my lowliness to the summit of grandeur. . . . . What would the Lord thus commend to our hearts, except that no one should presume in his own righteousness, and yet that no one should distrust the mercy which is so evident in the sanctification of a sinner and in the exaltation of an abject man?" From thoughts of humility the preacher rapidly rises to thoughts of majesty. "From this assembly, the favor and the love of the most holy Apostle Peter are not, I trust, re-

[6] Serm. 1. I use the recent Paris edition of Leo's works.

moved. He, in reverence for whom ye have come together, hath not disregarded your devotion. Nay, he doth rather rejoice in your affection, while in the successors to his honors he doth recognize the observance of the Lord's institution. Thus doth he approve the orderly spirit of the Church that obeyeth Peter in the see of Peter. . . . . Wherefore, beloved, do ye pray that the most merciful clemency of our God . . . . may render His servant capable of presiding at the helm of His Church."[7]

Such were the ideas with which Leo assumed his bishopric. They gathered strength with time. "The solidity," he preaches, "of that faith which was praised in the chief of the Apostles is perpetual. As that remaineth which Peter believed in Christ, so doth that remain which Christ instituted in Peter."[8] How this established the Roman see Leo had no hesitation in unfolding. "When the Apostles," he declares, "divided the earth amongst themselves, the most blessed Peter, chief of their rank, was appointed to the capital of the Roman Empire. This was in order that the light of truth, then revealing itself to the salvation of all nations, might be more efficaciously shed from the head through the whole body of the world. . . . . It was by becoming the sacred see of the blessed Peter that Rome became the head of the world."[9] "Who then," cries the successor to this supremacy,

[7] Serm. II. [8] Serm. III. [9] Serm. LXXXII.

"who then shall be found so ignorant or so envious concerning the glory of the blessed Peter, as to imagine that there are any parts of the Church unswayed by his care or unaided by his power? . . . . His see do we rejoice in serving rather than in ruling." [10]

Leo was very far from being absorbed in contemplating or in magnifying his own position. It was to generous views of faith that his elevation led him. "In the Prince of the Apostles," he proclaims, "there blooms and lives that love of God and of men which no prison-bars, no bonds, no popular passions, no royal threats have terrified. And insuperable still is the faith which never wearies in its contests, never cools in its victories." [11] Equally liberal expressions concerning liberty occur in the writings of Leo. "Arouse thee, O man! and recognize the dignity of thy nature! Remember that thou art made in the image of God, which, however corrupted in Adam, hath been restored in Christ. . . . . Born as we are for the present, we are born again for the future." [12] It might have seemed that the days of the recent reformers had returned. "True liberty," affirms Leo, "exists when the flesh is governed by the spirit, and the spirit by God." [13] Humanity had heard no more comprehensive assertion of its rightful liberty since it had received the law of love.

[10] "Cujus sedi non tam præsidere quam servire gaudemus." Serm. v.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Serm. XXVII.

[13] "Et vera libertas, quando et caro animo judice regitur, et animus Deo præside gubernatur." Serm. XXXIX.

To achieve the ends of which he was thus conscious, Leo needed all the authority within his grasp. It would not do for him to ape or to feel humility. The humble-minded had fallen in better times than these. Now, the high-minded alone could hope for success. The whole West needed a Christian ruler. If one could arise to act upon the views of faith and liberty which Leo had expressed, it was better for the age than any reformer — better than any martyr.

Leo began at Rome by obtaining the mastery over the various Heretical parties in the city. In their pursuit, likewise, he stretched out his arm over Italy.[14] Thence he turned to the Illyrian province where his predecessors had long before placed their Vicars.[15] From Illyria, he reached on to Alexandria, sending thither "the paternal and the fraternal greeting," without which the newly appointed Primate, Dioscorus, "might not consider his appointment complete."[16] Meanwhile, the hold of the Roman authority upon the universal priesthood, by means of the doctrine of clerical celibacy, was strengthened. Enactments touching the husbands of widows, or of more than one wife, were issued,[17] to be followed, at no long interval, by prohibitions against the marriage of Deacons, until then spared the obligations of their superiors."[18]

The power thus expansive flowed in liberal chan-

[14] Ep. 1, 2, 4, 7, 16.

[15] Ep. 5, 6. Plain traces of the Vicar in Illyria occur under Siricius. Ap. Conc., tom. II. p. 1229. Leo, Ep. 6.

[16] "Ne quid ad perfectionem deesse videatur. . . . . Paterna igitur et fraterna collatio debet sanctitati tuæ esse gratissima." Ep. 9.

[17] Ep. 4, 5.

[18] Ep. 14.

nels. About a quarter of a century before, the Bishop of Arles had been constituted Vicar of the Roman Bishop in Gaul. Hilarius, succeeding to the vicarship some years before the elevation of Leo, was a prelate of the highest repute for learning and for sanctity. To have upheld him for his own sake, would have been natural to any one of the large sympathies which Leo possessed. To have upheld him for the sake of his office, would have been natural to any Bishop of the see which he served as Vicar.

But when Hilarius was accused of deposing and creating prelates against all principles of justice or of humanity, Leo was the first to call him to an account. It was proved in a council at Rome, that Celidonius, Bishop of Besançon, had been unjustly driven from his see; and he was restored. It was further proved that Hilarius had gone beyond the limits of his jurisdiction to ordain a Bishop in place of one Projectus, who was too ill to offer any opposition. Had he been well, it was said, there could have been no resistance to the armed bands accompanying the Bishop of Arles. Projectus was also restored by the Roman council. Instead of being screened from the consequences of his proceedings, Hilarius was deprived, not only of the vicarship, but even of the primacy belonging to the see of Arles.[19] The sentences issued from Rome proclaimed

[19] All this, taking place in 444 and 445, is in Leo, Ep. 10. It is right to say that Honoratus, the biographer of Hilarius, makes out an account much more favorable to his hero. See Pasch. Quesnel., Diss. in Leon. Magn. Op., Diss. v., Apol. pro Hilario Arelatensi.

its Bishop the supporter of the weak against the powerful.

Leo did not rest satisfied until he had guarded against the return of oppression. "Ye have had prelates forced upon you," he writes to the Gallic Bishops, "even such as were unknown to the people over whom they were to preside. . . . . I beseech and implore you, brethren, as I charge you in the name of God, to prohibit these things. . . . . Let your prelates be sought in peace and in tranquillity. Let the consent of the clergy, the testimony of the principal men, the unanimity both of the priesthood and the people, be made the conditions of election. Let him who is to govern all be elected by all. And as for your primates, let them ordain each in his own province, with the aid of his oldest suffragans. We give up the claim that our see hath to take part in their ordinations."[20]

From the freedom of election, Leo passes to the freedom of communion. "Let not communion," he writes, "be lightly denied to any Christian. . . . . We have heard that some have been excluded from the privilege of communion for trifling deeds or words. We have heard that souls for which Christ's blood was shed, have been wounded by so violent a punishment in such a manner as to remain, unarmed and undefended, exposed to the attacks of the evil one. . . . . Let such sentences be pronounced no more according to the will of an angry

[20] "Ordinationem sibi . . . . . singuli metropolitani . . . . restituto sibi per nos jure defendant." Ep. 10.

priest."[21] Such decrees as these proved the authority promulgating them worthy of being extended.

Nor did it fail to receive the honor which it deserved. The orders which Leo had to send into Gaul, were laid before the Emperor Valentinian, and with the demand, as it seems, that they should be supported by instructions to the imperial functionaries in that province. Valentinian did more than was asked. "The primacy," he proclaimed, "of the Apostolic see hath been established by the merit of Saint Peter, Prince of the Episcopal Body, by the dignity of the Roman city, and by the authority of the Sacred Council. All these make it imperative that no presumption should dare to attempt aught that is unlawful in being contrary to the power of the above-named see. . . . . The sentence . . . . of that holy man, the Bishop of the city, ... will be executed in Gaul, even though unaccompanied by the imperial sanction. . . . . But we do ordain by this irrevocable edict that neither the Bishops of Gaul nor those of any other province shall attempt any thing contrary to ancient custom without the authority of the venerable, the Bishop of the Eternal City. But whatsoever the authority of the Apostolic see hath sanctioned, or shall sanction, let it be the law of all men."[22] From that day forth, there was a papal power in the world.

But it was far from Leo's purpose to build it up by any other authority, much less by the tottering

[21] "Nec ad indignantis fiat hoc arbitrium sacerdotis, quod in magni reatus," adds Leo, "ultionem invitus et dolens quodammodo debet inferre animus judicantis." Ep. 10.

[22] Ap. Leon. Op., Ep. 11.

authority of the Roman Emperor. The year after the edict in his honor, he took occasion to condemn recourse to the sovereign or to his officials. There was reason for doing so. Atticus, Bishop of Nicopolis, had come to Rome to complain against his Primate, Anastasius, Bishop of Thessalonica and Vicar of the Roman see. Angered by the delay of Atticus in obeying his orders, the Vicar had appealed to the Illyrian Præfect, at whose command the offending Bishop had been transported by force to Thessalonica. "Our brother Atticus hath returned to us," writes Leo to Anastasius, "bewailing with tears this most atrocious injury..... And we are told that the highest of all the temporal powers hath been excited to an attack upon an innocent priest, who, ... charged with no crime, or a pretended one, was torn from the sacred precincts of the church. ..... Even if he had committed anything wrong and intolerable, our judgment ought to have been awaited." "And if," he remarks in more general terms, "there are sometimes things to be reprehended, let it be remembered that benevolence will do more towards correction than severity, exhortation more than violence, charity more than power."[23]

The course to be taken when milder measures were impossible, is marked out in a letter from Leo to Turribius, Bishop of Astorga in Spain. "You have brought to our notice," begins the Roman, "the disease that hath broken out in your parts from the remains of the ancient pestilence..... So, then, it

[23] Ep. 14.

appeareth that the Priscillianist rabble hath recovered its vitality." To put down the consequent disorders, Leo suggests no appeal either to the imperial power or to his own. "Let an Episcopal council be called amongst yourselves. Let the clergy of the neighboring provinces assemble at a place convenient to all, and there let them examine whether any of your prelates are polluted by the contagion of this heresy. Such as refuse to condemn the sect are then to be separated from your communion."[24]

Here it was that the authority of Leo proved unequal to the wants of his generation. Freedom of election, freedom of communion, had been proclaimed in his despatch to Gaul. Freedom from the temporal power had been asserted in the despatch to Illyria. Freedom of ecclesiastical judgment was conveyed in the later despatch to Spain. But what besides? What, but the continued subjection of all save those who would make their own submission. Unreserved submission was the condition of the liberty proclaimed by Leo.

Whatever this liberty was, it could be gained only by allegiance to the see of Rome. A missive addressed "to the African Bishops of the Mauretanian Province," concludes in this wise. "Any matters pertaining to the ecclesiastical constitution, and to the concord of the priesthood, that may come up amongst you, are to receive consideration in the fear of the Lord. But let a full report of all things to be arranged, and of all things arranged, be sent

[24] Ep. 15.

to us, in order that our approval may confirm the sentences which have been pronounced justly and rationally, according to ecclesiastical law."[25] Nor was it from any merely selfish motive that Leo made this declaration. What he was able to do for the rights of his fellow-believers, as well as what he was able to do against them, depended upon the universality of his supremacy. "The strength of the ruler," he averred, "is the salvation of the subject."[26]

Hitherto, the Roman ruler had met with no resistance to his behests. What he had commanded had been done, what he had forbidden had been left undone. But he had exercised his authority only in the West. Would he meet with the same obedience in the East? Thither he turned, as if to complete the system which he was establishing.

An opening was made for him. Eutyches, the Abbot of a noted monastery near Constantinople, had "grown grey," as he said of himself, "in battles with Heretics and in confessions of piety."[27] In the fervor of his opposition to the doctrine of his Archbishop Nestorius, Eutyches declared that far from two natures being incarnate in the Saviour, there was but one, and that one the Divine. This he communicated to Leo, asserting his adhesion to the doctrine of Nice as to that of all the subsequent Catholic authorities; and, at the same time, imploring the protection of the Roman prelate.[28] A letter

[25] Ep. 12.

[26] "Integritas enim præsidentium salus est subditorum." Ibid.

[27] Ap. Conc., tom. IV. p. 921.

[28] Ap. Leon. Ep, 21. In the year 448.

from Flavian, Archbishop of Constantinople, announced the removal of Eutyches from his abbacy, and from the communion of the Constantinopolitan Church.[29] Further despatches from the Eastern Emperor Theodosius invited the intervention of Leo between the contending parties. So far the authority of the Roman see was already acknowledged in the East.

Leo replied both to the Emperor and to the Archbishop. To the latter he wrote as if he had not understood the communication which he had received. Perhaps the most important of the despatches from Flavian had miscarried. At all events, the Roman rebukes his colleague for having sent no suitable account concerning the condemnation of Eutyches, and the points at issue in the controversy.[30] To Theodosius, Leo gave praise for his "most pious anxiety in behalf of the Christian religion," adding that the controversy should be immediately investigated.[31] All the interest of the Roman was excited by believing himself to be defending the oppressed in defending Eutyches.

Flavian of Constantinople made haste to reply. After stating the grounds upon which the Abbot had been excommunicated, he went on to "show that the appeal to Rome was nothing more than a feint.[32] Instead of trusting to Leo, Eutyches had thrown himself upon the protection of Dioscorus, the same to whom the Roman had written as a superior

[29] Ap. Leon. Ep., 22.
[30] Ep. 23, 34.
[31] Ep. 24.
[32] Ap. Leon. Ep., 26.

on his election to the Alexandrian primacy a few years before. Dioscorus desired nothing better than to have the lead of a party pledged to resistance against his colleagues both of Constantinople and of Rome. At his demand, supporting that of Eutyches, the Eastern Emperor convoked a council to meet at Ephesus. All this was reported to Leo. It turned the scale in favor of Flavian, who, Archbishop though he was, occupied the position of one oppressed much more than Eutyches, who already counted on revenge. Leo did not hesitate to come to the support of his colleague. A long despatch, defending his doctrine and his authority, was committed by Leo to the hands of legates charged with the office of representing the Roman power at the approaching council.[33] Further letters were sent to the Emperor and his sister, the Regent Pulcheria, from both of whom Leo asks justice to the Catholic cause.[34] Still another address was drawn up, exhorting the council to establish "but one faith and but one creed for the entire world."[35]

Such was the earnestness with which Leo sprang into the Eastern lists, maintaining what he deemed to be the true principles of faith and of liberty. But the party of Eutyches and Dioscorus, maintaining the opposite principles, met him or his legates with violence and intrigue, which he would not imitate, and which, therefore, he could not crush. The majority at Ephesus reversed the sentence of Flavian against

[33] Ep. 28. Copies of the despatch were widely disseminated. Leo, Ep. 67, 68, 88, 97, 99. What Leo maintained at Rome may be seen in his Sermons, XXVIII., LXV., XCVI.

[34] Ep. 29, 30, 31.

[35] Ep. 33.

Eutyches, restoring the latter and deposing the former. As for the power of Rome, it was set at naught in proceedings so wild,[36] that the council deserved the name which it received as one of Robbers.[37]

The accession of Marcian to the Eastern Empire opened the way to a new synod within the next two years. Leo, who had thundered against the recent council in the ears not only of his colleagues, but of his sovereigns,[38] entreated, nay demanded, that the coming council should meet in Italy. Notwithstanding, it was convoked at Chalcedon, and there his authority was again rejected by his colleagues of the East.[39] Dioscorus of Alexandria was deposed.[40] The doctrine of Eutyches was condemned.[41] But the power of the see that had supported Flavian against him and his Alexandrian patron was declared to be noways superior to that of the sees at Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem.[42] Leo would have resisted a decree so contrary to the prerogatives which he had been claiming. But his

[36] One, if not all, of the legates representing it, was compelled to fly. Leo, Ep. 44, 46. Leo himself was declared excommunicated. Ap. Conc. Chalc., Conc., tom. IV. p. 1305.

[37] Ἡ λῃστρικὴ καὶ παράνομος σύνοδος. Theophan., Chron., Ad. Ann. 441. The year was 449. "Non potest vocari concilium." Leo, Ep. 90. Flavian is said to have been so "kicked and beaten" by Dioscorus, as to have died in consequence. Evag., II. 2. Liberat., Brev. Caus. Nestor. et Eutych., 12.

[38] Leo, Ep. 43, 44, 45, 54, 60, all to the Eastern sovereigns. Others are addressed in Ep. 47–51, 59, 75.

[39] 451. The sovereigns may have been more ready to acknowledge him. Theod. Lector, I. 3. And after the council, ap. Leon. Ep., 110.

[40] Conc. Chalc., as before, pp. 1348, *et ant. et seq.*

[41] Leo, Ep. 102 *et seq.*

[42] Of these four, however, that of Constantinople was still recognized to be superior. Conc. Chalc., c. 28.

attempt to assert his supremacy in the East was fruitless.[43]

The rejection of the papal power is not to be regarded as the proof of independence amongst the Eastern Christians. It arose, on the contrary, from causes that prove their dependence.

One of these causes was the inordinate power of the superior prelates. At the session next after that in which Dioscorus the Alexandrian had been sentenced, the council of Chalcedon received a confession of faith from thirteen members — all Egyptian Bishops. As the document contained no renunciation of the doctrine for which its supporter Dioscorus and its author Eutyches had both been condemned, an outcry was raised against the signers of the confession. They pleaded in exculpation that they did not dare to pledge themselves to any creed or to any sentence on the part of the council, until they should learn the sentiments of the Archbishop who was to succeed Dioscorus. "We beg, therefore," said their spokesman, "that this great and holy synod may take compassion upon us..... For if we do anything in contradiction to the will of our Primate, the whole province will declare against us. Pity our old age, pity us, and do not force us to end our lives in exile." Thereat the other twelve cast themselves upon the pavement, crying, "Pity us! Be merciful!" Vainly was the authority of the council urged upon them as superior to the threatening shadow of an Archbishop not yet appointed.

[43] Leo, Ep. 114, 115, 128, 134, 136. See Arendt, Leo der Grosse, pp. 313 *et seq.*

The Egyptians continued their supplications, and with so much abjectness, that they were exonerated from the responsibility of anticipating the decision of their future Primate.[44] An authority so absolute as that to which he was to be elevated, could hardly be subjected to the supremacy of any other see, whether at Constantinople or at Rome.

Another obstacle to the papal sway in the East consisted in the exalted power of the Eastern Emperor. Superstition was reaching to great lengths amongst all the Christians of the period. But amongst the Eastern Christians it entered into all their civil as well as all their religious relations. To no person could it cling more naturally than to the imperial person, the centre of the power and the splendor of which the court was still the scene. Clothed with a sanctity unknown in the Western Empire, the sovereign at Constantinople resembled the early sovereigns at Rome, the objects of adoration as well as of submission. The council at Ephesus had decided for Eutyches because he was in favor with the Emperor Theodosius. The council at Chalcedon decided against him because he was out of favor with the Emperor Marcian. Courtiers as well as prelates, imperial commissioners as well as ecclesiastical delegates, had their part in the deliberations of both the earlier and the later councils. When the assembly at Chalcedon had drawn up its creed, the Emperor Marcian, surrounded by his officers, came in to give it the approval without which it would have appeared

[44] Conc. Chalc., ap. Conc., tom. IV. pp. 1397 – 1407. Also, c. 30, p. 1693.

imperfect. The harangue of the sovereign was received with acclamations. "Long life to Marcian," was the cry, "the second Constantine, the second Paul, the second David! Worthy is he of Faith, worthy of Christ! O! Emperor of Heaven, guard the Emperor of Earth! Long life to the Priest and the Emperor, the Doctor of the Faith, who hath raised up the Church!"[45] From first to last, the attitude of the Emperor in the council was that of the Head, not merely of the State, but of the Church. If there had been no other cause to prevent the papal supremacy from extending over the East, the supremacy of the Eastern Emperor would have blocked up the way.

The last cause to be assigned was the tendency to liberty in the East. Few appeared to profess or to follow out any such inclination. But there were some. Foremost amongst them appears Theodoret, "consecrated from the cradle," as he says, "to God."[46] A native of Antioch, he was called in the prime of manhood to the bishopric of Cyrus, the metropolis of a large diocese in the interior of Syria. "I was ordained," he writes, "against my will."[47] But he entered with all his heart into the advancement of his people and of his generation. For the latter, he studied, and wrote out in a more liberal spirit than most of the ecclesiastical historians, the events that had transpired in the Church during the preceding centuries. For his people, he summoned

[45] Conc. Chalc., ap. Conc., tom. iv. p. 1512. So pp. 1474 *et seq.*, 1505 *et seq.*

[46] Ep. 81.

[47] Ibid.

artists and cultivated men to aid him in transforming his "desert town,"[48] as he termed it, into a city of comparative refinement and beauty.[49] In him the poor of Cyrus found a benefactor, the ignorant an instructor, the rich and the learned a sympathizing guide. "Five and twenty years," he said, when they had passed, "have I so lived in my diocese as never to have been called to trial by any man, or to have ever accused any one. None of my clergy have been before the tribunals during all these years."[50] At length, the time of controversy came. The defence, first of Nestorius and afterwards of Flavian, the Constantinopolitan prelates, against their adversaries of Alexandria, resulted in the deposition of Theodoret at the Ephesian council.

"I come," he wrote at once to Leo of Rome, "humble and weak, to your Apostolic throne, that I may obtain from you some cure for these wounds. For over all things," he adds, "doth your primacy extend."[51] The champion of freedom in the East appeals to his brother of the West, as to one whom he would fain acknowledge the superior, so that the East as well as the West might have its protector. That the appeal was answered is known by the appearance of Theodoret at Chalcedon, claiming his place amongst the prelates assembled there.[52]

[48] Ἔρημος οὖσα. Ep. 32.

[49] Ep. 81.

[50] Ibid. See Ep. 113.

[51] Ep. 113. The appeal to Leo was followed up by letters to others in the West. Ep. 116 *et seq.*

[52] Leo had pronounced the sentence of deposition against him to be null. Conc. Chalc., Conc., tom. IV. p. 873.

The question came up as to the restitution of Theodoret, by authority of the council likewise. He must anathematize Nestorius, and all of the same opinions, decided his colleagues; then shall he be pronounced lawfully restored. "But I cannot speak," replied Theodoret, "except in the manner which I know to be pleasing unto God. I wish to persuade you that I am not anxious about my diocese, or troubled for mine honor. Not on this account have I come hither. But inasmuch as I have been calumniated, I come to make it clear that I am orthodox, and that I virtually anathematize Nestorius, and Eutyches, and all their partizans." "He is a Heretic!" cried out the council. "He is a Nestorian! Put the Heretic out of doors!" The Bishop of Cyrus, until then so high above his colleagues, fell. "Anathema," he exclaimed, "upon Nestorius, upon him who saith that the Virgin Mary is not the Mother of God, upon him who divideth the Son, the Only Begotten, into two Sons! I have signed the confession of faith and the letter of the most holy Archbishop Leo. So do I believe." He paused. The difference between the words which he had uttered and those which he had resolved to utter overcame him. "Farewell," he sobbed; and with that he departed.[53] Leo wrote to Theodoret as if he had triumphed.[54] It was difficult in that age to see how he had fallen.

[53] Conc. Chalc., Conc., tom. IV. pp. 1521, 1524. Gennadius places the death of Theodoret at or after 457. De Ill. Vir., 89.

[54] Ep. 120.

The issue of the council at Chalcedon did not prevent Leo from interfering in Eastern affairs. His ambition to be the universal ruler of the Catholics might not be gratified. But his desire to be their universal champion led him into the midst of the disorders excited where his supremacy had been rejected. The deeds of violence and horror, for instance, perpetrated amongst the monks of Palestine by whom the council of Chalcedon was rejected, demanded the intervention of Leo, if not as the Bishop, then as the Christian.[55] Equally serious was his obligation, he thought, to attempt the restoration of order at Alexandria where the Archbishop Proterius was murdered by those opposed to the council of Chalcedon.[56] But the exertions of Leo, whether disinterested or interested, were made in vain.

Meanwhile his sway was undisputed in the West. It had been too useful, as well as too vigorous to be renounced or even opposed. The Western Catholics could not deny him submission. They did not desire to do so.

Without having entirely satisfied the want of his age in relation to the establishment of an ecclesiastical supremacy, Leo had done all that could be done by mortal man. And he had achieved a vast work. If he had turned from the Heathen, he had succored the Christians. If he had repressed the Heretics, he had united the Catholics. To a certain degree he had defended them. Against the inroads

[55] See his letters, 123 *et seq.* [56] Ep. 129, 130, 144 *et seq.*

of the Northern races, no Roman authority could be generally effectual. Yet it was Leo of Rome[57] who arrested Attila the Hun. It was Leo who turned back Genseric the Vandal.[58]

[57] I have refrained from using the title of Pope, inasmuch as it did not belong exclusively to the Bishops of Rome until the eleventh century. Gies., Man. Eccl. Hist., § 117, note 17.

[58] See the next chapter. Leo died in 461. St. Chéron, Léon-le-Grand, ch. XVII.

CHAPTER VI.

ATTILA AND GENSERIC.

"Quid enim vel de nobis vel de Gothis ac Vandalis Deus judicet, res probant. Illi crescunt quotidie, nos decrescimus ; illi proficiunt, nos humiliamur ; illi florent, et nos arescimus." — SALVIANUS, *De Gubernatione Dei*, VII. p. 253.

FROM the very year of Leo's accession,[1] two fearful foes beset the Empire. One was the Vandal Genseric, who, after having made himself master of the African province, was then on the way to Sicily. The other was Attila the Hun, at that time preparing to invade the Eastern realms from the Illyrian frontier.

With these invaders, the terrors from the North reached their climax. What sort of a Christian Genseric was, may be gathered from previous narrations. Attila, as will soon be seen, was an utter Heathen. Neither, therefore, can be ranked amongst the Northern Christians whose part it was to act in the development of human liberty. Yet both of them came to support the movement that was to be achieved by the Christians of the North.

[1] 440, the thirty-third year of the second Theodosius's reign, the sixteenth of the third Valentinian's.

With Attila came the main body of the Northern host, then for more than half a century breaking into the imperial realms. Contests with the Huns and other races of the same stamp had given the impetus to the first inroads of the Visigoths and their contemporary invaders. The strife that had begun upon unknown lands was to be decided in the heart of the Roman territories. In such a warfare there could be but one point at issue. It was not whether the Empire or its invaders should prevail. It was which of the invaders should lose and which should win the Empire.

On one side were arrayed the races already encamped upon the imperial domains. Some of these, as has been mentioned, had settled down into comparatively organized nations. Others were still restlessly pursuing after realms and institutions with which they could be tranquillized. Those who, like the Vandals in Africa, were plunged to the eyes in deeds of blood and devastation, stood on the other side. With them are to be ranked the still fiercer hordes like those marching under Attila. Were these to triumph, the centralization against which they had been armed would fall. But all the elements of good that it contained would be annihilated. Were their antagonists to prevail, the centralization would be overwhelmed. But whatever there was in it to act upon the future might be preserved.

Such was the momentous question to be determined when Genseric, flushed with his ravages in Africa, approached the Italian shores. No power there could prevent him from landing in Sicily or

from crossing over to almost the only soil yet remaining to the Western Emperor. To guard against interference from the East, the Vandal is said to have sent an ambassador to Attila. The imperial chroniclers declare that it was to urge the Hun to invade the territories of the Eastern Emperor.[2] At all events, it was the purpose of Genseric to obtain the coöperation of his already renowned contemporary. Together, the two would sweep the Empire of its subjects and its previous foes.

Five years had then elapsed since Attila had become king.[3] From the first, he had obliged the Eastern court to increase its tribute to his much dreaded nation.[4] The Vandal embassy found him marshalling a host of nations, amongst whom the Gepidæ and the Ostrogoths were the most considerable,[5] with the view of exacting more abject submission from the sovereigns of the East. Beyond their thrones, he seemed to behold a height from which he was destined to rule alike the Orient and the Occident, the Northern and the Roman realms. To realize his vision, Attila hesitated neither at exciting terrors nor at committing crimes. The blood of his kinsmen washed his feet as he ascended the throne of the Huns.[6] When his ambition increased after a few years of butchery in the Eastern provinces, he slew his brother as though he would have had

[2] Prosper., Chron., Ad Ann. 442. Theophanes, Chron., Ad Ann. 441, p. 157, ed. Nieb.

[3] 434. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 35.

[4] Priscus, Leg. ad Gent., pp. 167 *et seq.*, ed. Nieb. On the Huns, see Klaproth, Tabl. Hist. de l'Asie, pp. 234 *et seq.*, or St.-Martin's notes to Le Beau, tom. IV. pp. 60 *et seq.*

[5] Jorn., De Reb. Get., 34. De Regn. Succ., p. 125.

[6] Jorn., De Reb. Get., 35.

none to dispute his supremacy.[7] He professed to wield the iron sword of Mars.[8] It was the cloud by day and the fire by night amongst his people, his tributaries and his foes.[9]

A seven years' war,[10] if such a name can be given to the almost unresisted desolation wrought by Attila, reduced the Eastern court to the utmost imbecility. Three years of truce, in which the power of the invader was equally conspicuous, ensued. Again a summons came from Genseric, invoking the presence of the Hun where battles as well as enemies were to be found. Successful as the Vandal had been in his expeditions along the shores and across the waves of the Mediterranean, he was in danger of being arrested. His atrocious cruelty to the wife of his eldest son had provoked the wrath of her father, Theodoric, for thirty years the king of the Visigoths. The preparations of this monarch to lead his forces through Spain into Africa excited the alarm of Genseric.[11] His appeal was not the only one which Attila received. The widow of a Frank chieftain invoked his aid in behalf of her children against an usurper of their heritage.[12] Even the Empire made

[7] Jorn., De Reb. Get., 34. Marcell., Chron., v. 13. Prosper., Chron., Ad Ann. 445. Mr. James, in his novel of Attila, represents the murder of the brother as the just penalty of treachery on his part. It may have been so.

[8] The story is in Jornandes, De Reb. Get., 34.

[9] Ὁ τῆς οἰκουμένης πολέμιος, "The enemy of the whole universe," says Lydus, De Magist., III. 43. A sketch of the mysterious ideas connnected with him may be found in Herbert's Hist. Treatise upon Attila, § 24, 25.

[10] From about 440 to 447. Marcell., Chron., v. 9, 10, 15. Priscus, Leg. ad Rom., 3, pp. 142, 147 *et seq.*

[11] 450. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 36.

[12] Priscus, Leg. ad Rom., p. 152. Herbert's Attila, § 44 *et seq.*

its call upon the Hun. The sister of the Western Emperor, the shameless Honoria, proffered her hand and her imperial titles to the stranger, would he but make her his queen.[13] What with intrigues at the Roman court and strifes amongst its invaders, there was sufficient space for the blows of Attila.

He led forth his warriors, preceded by his envoys. To the Emperors, both of the East and of the West, he is said to have sent a Goth to say, "My master and yours, Attila, commands you to prepare his palace!"[14] To Valentinian he sent more emphatic demands touching his claims to the person and the titles of Honoria.[15] At the same time, as if scorning to suffer the Emperor to imagine that his shrunken authority could provoke so mighty an enemy, Attila directed his messengers to proclaim his foe to be the Visigoth Theodoric.[16] To him the Hun addressed remonstrances against his alliance with his former foes of Rome.[17] The league of the Visigoth with the Roman government not being broken by words,[18] Attila assailed it by arms. It was but a renewal of the hostilities that had driven the Goths from their ancient settlements, near a century before.[19]

[13] The offer may have been made before, but it received no attention from Attila until the present time. Priscus, Leg. ad Rom., pp. 151, 152. Cf. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 42. Marcell., Chron., v. 2.

[14] Chron. Pasch., Ad Ann. 450.

[15] Priscus, Leg. ad Rom., p. 152.

[16] Jorn., De Reb. Get., 36. In the Hist. Miscell., xv. p. 100, it is assumed that Attila declared his intention to recover Gaul and Spain from the Western government.

[17] Jorn., De Reb. Get., 36.

[18] Id., ib.

[19] "Les Goths que les Huns sembloient poursuivre jusqu'aux extrémités de la terre." Sismondi, Hist. des Franç., tom. I. p. 156.

In one line, stood Attila with his troop of kings.[20] In the other, was Theodoric with all the neighboring nations, Burgundians, Franks and Saxons, as well as the Roman mercenaries under Aëtius.[21] The forces of the Hun were reckoned at upwards of half a million;[22] those of the league against him having been proportionately numerous. Terrible, though brief, proved the campaign in Gaul through which Attila hurried towards the Visigothic domains. His march lay over smoking walls and mutilated corpses. The Heathen, whom the Christians accused of exciting the invasion, fell before its horrors. So did the Christians,[23] to whose desertion of the ancient religion the Heathen ascribed the successes of the foe. Everything gave way until siege was laid to Orleans, whence Attila was compelled to retire before the forces of his enemies.[24] A general engagement at length took place at Chalons, where the further progress of the Hun was stayed. The victory, if such it can be called, cost the Visigothic king his life, while Attila, wreaking vengeance for his losses, withdrew forever from Gaul.[25]

As if convinced that he must separate the Roman forces from the Northern nations with whom he was contending, Attila turned to Italy. Crossing the

[20] "Turba regum diversarumque nationum ductores." Jorn., De Reb. Get., 38.

[21] Id., ib., 36.

[22] Jornandes (De Reb. Get., 35,) says 500,000. The number reaches 700,000 in the Hist. Miscell., xv. p 97.

[23] Gregory of Tours (II. 6) describes the desolation of the "Mettensis urbs": — "Tradentes urbem incendio et populum in ore gladii trucidantes, ipsosque sacerdotes Domini ante sacrosancta altaria perimentes."

[24] At the prayer of Anianus, Bishop of the beleaguered city. Greg. Tur., II. 7.

[25] 451. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 36-41. Hist. Miscell., xv. p. 100.

Alps in the next year, he took the great city of Aquileia by storm, and soon made himself master of the neighboring territory. But one spot escaped him, and that was Venice, where the terrified Italians found their only defence.[26] Flushed with triumph, Attila advanced to Milan. He was at the height of his exaltation when he saw a picture representing the Roman Emperors receiving the homage of Scythian chieftains. "Paint me," he commanded, "upon a throne, with your Emperors bringing sacks of gold to empty at my feet."[27] He determined to make the scene a reality by marching upon Rome.

At this juncture, an embassy from the court arrived to attempt the purchase of peace and safety. At the head of the envoys was Leo of Rome. No longer wearing the commanding mien with which his colleagues and his priests were familiar, he bent the knee before the invader, entreating in tears that the Empire might be spared.[28] In such demeanor there was no pusillanimity. The cry had been raised by a hermit in Gaul that Attila was the scourge of God,[29] chastising the Christians as well as the Heathen for their sins. "I am the Hammer of the World," reëchoed the voice of the Hun.[30] It argued more than ordinary courage in the Roman prelate to seek the presence of so fear-

[26] See St.-Martin's notes to Le Beau, tom. vi. p. 331.

[27] Suidas, cited by Gibbon, Decline and Fall, ch. 35.

[28] The various references are given in Herbert's Attila, pp. 505 *et seq.*

[29] Nicolas Olaus, as above, p. 449.

[30] Id., ib., p. 459.

ful a being. It argued more than ordinary independence on his part that he should have been supposed to have arrested the terrible march which Attila was preparing against Rome.[31] But there were other causes to stay the Hun. Many of his followers lay stricken with disease around him. Behind him his enemies were preparing new forces and new expeditions. His warriors faltered. He himself hesitated. There was a dread, it is reported, about approaching the city whose sack was supposed to have cost Alaric his life.[32] Attila consented to accept the tribute promised in case of his departure. Then he withdrew, but not without menaces of returning at another time.[33] The next year witnessed his death.[34]

Another and an equally perilous foe remained in the Vandal Genseric. It was as his instrument, to a certain degree, that Attila had invaded the Eastern and the Western realms. At all events, the place of the Hun was immediately taken by the Vandal. Profiting by the weakness to which his contemporary had reduced the imperial government, Genseric set sail to execute his long-meditated invasion of Italy. As the sister of Valentinian had called the Hun, so was the Vandal now summoned

[31] "Es war ein Sieg," exclaims the German biographer, "den der Geist recht eigentlich über die weltliche Macht davontrag." Arendt, Leo der Grosse, p. 329.

[32] Jorn., De Reb. Get., 42.

[33] Id., ib.

[34] 453. Id., ib., 49 – 53. Priscus, Leg. ad Rom., p. 160. On Attila's reputed invasion of Gaul just previously to his death, see Jorn., De Reb. Get., 43, and Chron. Pasch., Ad Ann. 450, p. 587.

by the widow of the same Emperor.[35] Genseric was soon in possession of Rome. The sack of the city lasted for fourteen terrible days.[36]

Nothing, however, could cloy the invader. So long as one stone remained upon another, where the imperial power had once triumphed, where the Catholic dominion was still triumphant, the Arian and the Northerner would consider his victory incomplete. It was noised that he intended to burn the city and exterminate its population. To prevent him, there seemed none but captives or fugitives, until the Bishop Leo again assumed the office of defender amidst his distracted countrymen. Whatever Attila had seemed to the Christians generally, that Genseric was in the eyes of the Catholics. Of them especially had he declared himself the foe, and from the outrages just perpetrated at Rome, none had suffered so poignantly as they. Nor could it be hoped that the marvels or the statutes of their Church would avail against its avowed persecutor. Yet Leo had not only the courage to confront, but the ability to overawe the conqueror, who abandoned the design of utterly destroying the imperial city.[37] As if he would not stay unless he could destroy, the Vandal returned almost immediately to Carthage. Thither the surviving members of the imperial family were taken amongst the invader's

[35] Valentinian was murdered in 455, at the instigation of Petronius Maximus, who played the Emperor for a few weeks, until he, too, was assassinated by his mercenaries. Proc., Bell. Vand., I. 4, 5.

[36] June, 455. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 45. Hist. Miscell., xv. p. 101. Proc., Bell. Vand., I. 5.

[37] Victor, Chron., Ad Ann. 455.

captives.[38] Leo remained to urge his people to increased piety on account of their deliverance.[39]

The career of Genseric was far from being ended. There yet remained to him two-and-twenty years of life and of oppression. But he never rose again to such an elevation of force and of terror as that on which he stood at Rome. Like all other implements of mere destruction, both he and Attila could exercise only a temporary power amongst men.

Small was the part in these convulsive times sustained by the decrepit courts of Constantinople or of Italy. Marcian, as the husband of Pulcheria, succeeded to the throne of Theodosius.[40] After him, it bore the feebler weight of Leo the Thracian,[41] and his son-in-law Zeno.[42] The throne of Valentinian in the West, after being lost by his murderer Maximus, passed into the titular possession of eight successive sovereigns.[43] But over them, as over their Eastern colleagues, the sway of ministers or officers belonging to the Northern nations imperiously extended. During the greater part of the period, Aspar, an Alan or a Goth, governed at Constantinople.[44]

[38] Theophanes, Chron., Ad Ann. 447, p. 168.

[39] It seems that they thought more of their games than of their devotions. Serm. LXXXIV.

[40] 450 to 457. He was the only sovereign to offer even a nominal resistance to Attila. Priscus, Leg. ad Rom., p. 151.

[41] 457 to 474. Zonaras, XIII. 25, XIV. 1. Jorn., De Regn. Succ., p. 129.

[42] His son, Leo the younger, grandson of the Thracian Leo, intervened. So did Basiliscus, the brother-in-law of the elder Leo. Zeno did not really begin to reign until 477. Theoph., Chron., Ad Ann. 467 *et seq.*, pp. 186 *et seq.*

[43] Avitus (455 to 457), Majorian (to 461), Severus (to 465), Anthemius (467 to 472), Olybrius (to 473), Glycerius (to 474), Julius Nepos (to 475), and Romulus Augustus (to 476).

[44] Priscus, Leg. ad Rom., p. 163. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 45.

At the changing capitals of the Western court, the Sueve or the Visigoth Ricimer was not only the ruler, but the creator of many amongst the nominal sovereigns.[45] One of Attila's officers was the father and the enthroner of the last Western Emperor. Despite the glories of his names, Romulus Augustus, already called the Little, resigned his broken sceptre into the hands of the Herulian Odoacer, who was hailed King of Italy.[46] He was the son of another officer under Attila. It was thus between associates of the invader that the contest for the scanty remnants of the Empire was fought at last.

Amongst the multitude suffering in this fatal period, was Sidonius Apollinaris, a noble, and, in his latter years, a prelate of Gaul. His writings show the dangers to which men were exposed from friends as well as from foes,[47] from their own vices as well as from the violences of their enemies.[48] Corruptions reigned in the imperial churches.[49] The imperial courts were haunted by "shadows" wearing "the wonted purple," but ruling "by the force of

[45] He was the grandson on the mother's side of Alaric's successor Vallia. "Virum egregium," says Jornandes, as above, "et pene tunc in Italia ad exercitum singularem." In a contest with Anthemius, Ricimer gave up Rome to be plundered by his mercenaries. 472. Jorn., as above. Cassiodorus, Chron.

[46] 476. "Gothorum dehinc regibus Romam Italiamque tenentibus." Jorn., De Reb. Get., 46. Odoacer liked the title of Patrician, bestowed upon him by the Eastern Emperor Zeno. Malchus, Leg. ad Rom., pp. 235–237.

[47] "Nec impugnantium ira nec propugnantium caremus invidia." Ep., III. 11.

[48] "Nam certum est non minus vitiorum quam hostium esse captivum, qui non etiam inter mala tempora bona vota servaverit." Ib., ib.

[49] See his letter (IV. 25) describing the elections of various prelates, one boasting of his birth, another gaining supporters by his good dinners, and a third promising the plunder of the church to his adherents!

custom, not by the strength of law."[50] To all this the Gaul is obliged to contrast the energies of which the invaders alone gave proof. One of his letters describes the court of the Visigothic King at Toulouse. He sees all the splendor of his own government clothing an active and a powerful administration. He beholds the daily increasing familiarity of the strangers with the laws and the arts of the Empire against which their arms had prevailed.[51] The most stubborn nature could not but bend before the comparison of the Visigothic with the Roman rulers. Deeper and deeper sank the spirits of the imperial subjects. The Roman Christians had recourse to new fasts[52] and penances, so that they could but avert what seemed to be the consequences of their sins.

The agonies of the time seemed to crowd out all other thoughts. "Verily," writes Salvian, a Presbyter at Marseilles, "verily hath Italy been devastated, Rome besieged and stormed. Barbarous tribes have inundated Gaul. The Vandal race hath passed into Spain. And wars have reft from us Sardinia, Sicily, and Africa."[53] The Christian confesses still more. "Men migrate," he says, "to the Goths, or to any other barbarians now triumphing; nor doth it shame them to abandon us.[54] . . . . . For they would rather

[50] "Portavimus umbram
Imperii, generis contenti ferre vetusti
Et vitia, ac solitam vestiri murice gentem
More magis quam jure pati."
Paneg. Avito dict., ap. Coll. Pisaur., tom. IV. p. 53.

[51] Ep., I. 2.

[52] The Rogation Days before Ascension, instituted by Mamertus, Bishop of Vienne in Gaul. Sidon. Apoll., Ep., v. 14, VII. 1.

[53] De Gub. Dei, VI. p. 213. So IV. p. 107.

[54] Some, like Syagrius, "Burgundiorum Solon." Sid. Apoll., Ep., v. 5. Others, like Arvandus or Seronatus, "barbaris provin-

live in liberty under the name of captivity, than live in captivity under the name of liberty."[55] The contrast that had struck Sidonius was equally clear to Salvian. "Do we think," he asks, "that we can be safe when every stain of impurity, every brand of dishonor, is allowed by Romans, but punished by barbarians?"[56] It must have been strange for the Roman to acknowledge that many of the evil customs amongst his nation had disappeared in consequence of the invasions.[57] The Presbyter of Marseilles catches a view of a brighter future. His tone swells to that of a prophet appealing not only to the penitence, but to the faith of his generation.

It was evident that good was working its way out of so much distress. The career of the more violent invaders was approaching its close. Genseric, after wreaking ravages throughout his later years, died recognized as a sovereign by the Eastern Emperor,[58] and succeeded by a son.[59] But as the Huns subsided on the loss of Attila, so the Vandals sank from the day of Genseric's death.

The strife between one race and another from the North was not over. But its issue was determined. Less savage than Genseric or Attila were those to be who should emerge triumphant from the conflict.

cias propinantem." Id., ib., I. 7, II. 1, v. 13, VII.

[55] De Gub. Dei, v. p. 161. So III. p. 63. There were attempts at independence both of Northern and of Roman rule, such as those of Marcellinus in Dalmatia (Proc., Bell. Vand., I. 6), or of Ægidius in Gaul (Prisc., Leg. ad Rom., p. 156; Idat., Chron., VI. 3).

[56] De Gub. Dei, VII. p. 422.

[57] Ib., VI. p. 202.

[58] Proc., Bell. Vand., I. 7.

[59] Id., ib. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 33. Isid., Chron. Vand., pp. 228–230. Genseric died in 477. The persecution of the African Catholics was not stayed until the reign of Genseric's grandson Hilderic. Proc., Bell. Vand., I. 8, 9.

The foundation of comparatively lasting states was already laid in some of the Roman provinces. From Toulouse in every direction, alike through the most cultivated portions of Gaul and the most rugged portions of Spain, extended the Visigothic kingdom.[60] On one of its Gallic frontiers, it touched the Burgundian; on another the Frank territories. Across the channel, the kingdoms of the Jutes, the Angles, and the Saxons, were rising in Britain.[61]

One thing was decided for ever. The imperial centralization had fallen too utterly not only to be restored, but to be recognized. Its doom had been pronounced by Alaric. It was fulfilled by Genseric and Attila.

[60] The second Theodoric (452 to 466) and his brother Euric (to 484) were the most successful rulers of the time. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 44, 45. "Sub hoc rege [Eurico] Gothi legum instituta scriptis habere cœperunt." Isid., Chron. Got., p. 213.

[61] Anglo-Saxon Chron., Ad Ann. 449. Ethelward's Chron., Book I. Bede, I. 15. On the condition of the Britons, see the ingenious work, "Britannia after the Romans," vol. I. pp. 41 *et seq.*

CHAPTER VII.

THEODORIC AND CLOVIS.

"On est fixé sur son caractère de force, ... mais non totalement destructiv d'impuissance à renouveler tout et d'impuissance à tout abolir."

THIERRY, *Temps Mérovingiens*, ch. v.

IT was determined to which of the invaders the victory should fall. The Northern Christians were to triumph. But which of these would finally prevail, had not yet appeared. All could not stand on equal terms. Some must win a larger dominion, some a more enduring one than others. Would the Arian, the first to conquer, be also the last to rule? Or would the Catholic rise up to dispute the supremacy?

More than these names depended upon the issue. Not only was there the difference in creeds. This was becoming less distinct amidst the confusion in which the Northern Christians, nay, the Romans likewise, were more and more involved. The difference in dispositions, in institutions, and in prospects, was rather noticeable. One course seemed to be marked out for the Catholic nation, another for the Arian. Both might assail the ancient order of things on this side. On that, they might both submit to it. Both

might deal cruelly, or both might deal mercifully, with those whom they had conquered. Both might be comparatively free, or both comparatively oppressed, in their own national relations. Yet the Arian and the Catholic would still be widely separated. The latter was inclined to acknowledge the power established amongst his fellow-believers of the Empire. The former denied it. Here lay the great distinction. On this was staked the ultimate preponderance of the Arian or of the Catholic amongst the Northern Christians.

What the development of freedom might be, was another matter. The obstacles in the way of liberty appeared to be augmented rather than lessened. Especially was this the case in relation to the liberty particularly bestowed upon the Christian. The law of love seemed to be overthrown in the whirlwind of desolation that had passed over the East and the West. The powers that the law called forth, the rights which it established, were in most places completely prostrate. Mere outward liberty was as far from being assured as ever. The lines of division between the victorious and the vanquished, depriving the latter of their lands as well as of their few remaining prerogatives, appeared to forebode increasing bondage rather than increasing freedom. Nor was the position of the conquerors altogether promising. The weak submitted to the strong amongst the Northern races, as abjectly as they had ever done amongst the Romans. The numbers of dependants and slaves, of the oppressed and the degraded, were much the same in the new nations as in the old.

That all these barriers in the way of advancing liberty should fall in one age, or in a score of ages, was not to be anticipated. Neither the Catholic nor the Arian could achieve the immediate liberation of mankind. The opponent of the Catholic power might be resisting centralization. But its supporter would as clearly be upholding union. Neither, however, could pass as the unequivocal champion of liberty.

All this appears in the two great rulers of the times. Theodoric obtains possession of Italy. He is the Arian. Clovis becomes master of Gaul. He is the Catholic. The fairest provinces of the West come beneath the control of chieftains, who, as the representatives of their races, open the destinies long since foreseen. What either of the two may do for liberty will not be as plain as might be wished. But we can gather from the fortunes of Clovis and Theodoric, which of the Northern Christians, the Arian or the Catholic, were to retain the sway over the broken realms of Rome.

Born of the ruling Ostrogothic family, Theodoric spent his youth as a hostage at Constantinople.[1] Nothing amongst the institutions of the imperial city pleased him like its military establishments, nothing amongst its amusements like the hunting-grounds of the environs. He was still unlettered, as he was still youthful, when he returned to his own people, at whose head he soon assumed a commanding aspect. His heritage was not so much a dominion

[1] Jorn., De Reb. Get., 52.

already acquired as the power to acquire one. The Ostrogoths of the preceding generation had learned how to do battle under the banners of Attila. The lesson was not lost upon the generation of Theodoric.

Laden with titles[2] and endowed with lands,[3] the Ostrogoth proved not the less unmanageable by the Eastern government. Threatening Constantinople and the court with destruction, he was diverted from his purposes by receiving the grant of Italy, provided he would wrest the country from its actual possessor, Odoacer.[4] The victory won by that chieftain twelve years before was now disputed by Theodoric. Not merely warriors, but women and children, "with as much," says the historian, "as they could bring," came in the train of the Ostrogoth, so certain were they of his triumph.[5] Odoacer, defeated, was first acknowledged as a colleague and then assassinated.[6]

The fallen chieftain had been the first of the invaders to frame a government from the ruins of the imperial system. Others had adopted a statute here or a custom there, yielding frequently, but never uniformly, to the Roman or to the Christian civilization. Odoacer, though the leader of a mercenary force rather than of an adventurous tribe, gave way on almost all points to the usages and to the laws of the province which he had conquered. He did not

[2] Marcell., Chron., VIII 6. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 57.

[3] Marcell., Chron., VIII. 10. Proc., Bell. Goth., I. 1.

[4] 489. The grant was afterwards disputed, but of its having been made there appears to be no doubt. Proc., and Jorn., as before. Exc. e Lib. Chron., ap. Amm. Marc., p. 618.

[5] Proc., Bell. Goth., I. 1.

[6] 493. Proc., as before. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 46, 57. Exc. e Lib. Chron., pp. 618–620.

do this either out of compassion or out of weakness in relation to the conquered. It was for his own advantage, as he discovered, to restore the imperial forms of government[7] and to follow out the imperial principles of treaty[8] or of conquest.[9] His Northern followers, as well as his Italian subjects, showed themselves impressed with every proof of resemblance between their new monarch and the former sovereigns of Italy. Nor were the nations upon the Italian borders found to be unsusceptible of similar impressions, especially when these were supported by disciplined armies. The very destroyers of the ancient centralization entrenched themselves amongst its ruins.

Such an example as that of Odoacer was not thrown away upon Theodoric. Invested with the monarchy by the imperial grant, as he allowed himself to be,[10] he was to a great degree the imitator of the Roman sovereigns. Whatever use of the ancient institutions had been made by Odoacer, his conqueror was likely to go farther in the same direction. Theodoric made Rome his mirror.[11]

The greater the recourse to the ancient institutions, the greater was the consideration for those born beneath them. Neither Odoacer nor Theodoric had the slightest respect for the Italians as men of arms. But as men of law or of cultivation, Italians

[7] He was the first of the invaders to restore the consulate. Muratori, Annali d'Italia, tom. III. p. 236.

[8] Beginning with Genseric. Vict. Vit., De Pers. Vand., I. p. 416.

[9] In Dalmatia and Noricum. Paul. Diac., De Gest. Lang., I. 9. Cassiod., Chron.

[10] And seeking its confirmation after victory. Exc. e Lib. Chron., pp. 620, 622.

[11] "E Roma guarda sì come suo speglio." *Inferno.*

rose to the highest eminence at the Ostrogothic court.[12] The subjects of the former rulers in Italy could best suggest, as they could best appreciate the efforts by which their new master sought to clothe himself with majesty. Not the less did the Italians remain the vanquished class amongst the subjects of Theodoric. What they could do for him was their bounden duty. What he did for them was his gracious condescension. In nothing was the ancient centralization more imitated than in the subjugation of the Italians.

The fate of the Italians was the fate of the Catholics amongst them. Neither Odoacer nor Theodoric rejected the service which their Catholic subjects could render. The chosen negotiator between the two, while still contending for the crown of Italy, was the Bishop of Ravenna.[13] When the Ostrogoth had come off victorious, he adopted the counsel of the Bishop of Pavia, entreating that the followers of the fallen monarch might be spared.[14] To the same prelate, Theodoric gave it in charge to redeem the Italians who had been dragged from the recent conflicts into captivity.[15] Nor would the Ostrogoth allow the Catholics to be molested on account of their faith. They were not even encouraged to abandon it. When one of their clergy embraced the Arian creed in order to gain his master's favor, he was ordered to be executed. "He

[12] Exc. e Lib. Chron., p. 620. Cassiod., Chron.

[13] Proc., Bell. Goth., i. 1.

[14] Ennod., Vit. Epiph., ap. Sirmond., Op. Var., tom. i. pp. 1012 *et seq.*

[15] Id., ib., pp. 1014 *et seq.*

that has been faithless to his God," exclaimed Theodoric, "will never be faithful to his king!"[16] This toleration[17] of the Catholic creed rendered the humiliation of the Catholic power all the more marked. They need not change their faith. But they must not force the conversion of others. They were not to be persecuted. But they were not to persecute others.[18] They were to serve the sovereign. But they were not to be served unless the sovereign so willed. "Hail, greatest of kings!" exclaimed one of the Catholic prelates who knew the tone to take. "Hail to the State which thou hast founded!"[19]

Especially was the supremacy of the monarch asserted over the Bishop of Rome. Odoacer had declared it his pleasure to be consulted concerning the appointments to that great see.[20] Theodoric was still more earnest in proving that the Roman power, whether in synods or in individual prelates, must yield to his authority.[21] The clergy confessed the dependence of the Roman bishopric on the Italian monarchy in a council held not many years after the beginning of Theodoric's reign.[22] In vain were remonstrances offered from the Catholic leaders in other

[16] Zonaras, XIV. 3.

[17] What could be said of Theodoric's toleration by a later generation, is in Proc., Bell. Goth., II. 6.

[18] As in the case of the Jews at Ravenna, Exc. e Lib. Chron., p. 625. "Dum nostra deceat sedare confusa." Cassiod., Var., IV. 17.

[19] Ennod., Paneg., ap. Sirmond., Op. Var., tom. I. p. 959. "Tempore," says the same writer, "quo Italiam optatissimus Theodorici regis suscitavit ingressus." Eucharist., ap. Sirmond., as before, p. 1032.

[20] "Non sine nostra consultatione cujuslibet celebretur electio." Ap. Conc., tom. V. p. 473.

[21] Exc. e Lib. Chron., p. 622. Anast., De Vit. Rom. Pont., 52, 53. Conc., tom. V. pp. 386, 441–516.

[22] 501. Conc., tom. V. p. 457.

quarters.[23] The Ostrogoth maintained his supremacy.

This was by no means destructive to the Roman see. It rather gained than lost by depending upon so strong an arm as that of Theodoric. It was at war with the Eastern Church.[24] It was severed by invasions and revolutions from the greater number of the Western Churches. Had not the resources of the Roman power been concentrated upon its relations with the temporal authority of the new sovereign, it would have been exposed to more dangerous controversies.[25] The dependence upon the Ostrogothic monarch was a protection while it lasted. It would not endure for ever.

Such was the position of the Catholics and the Italians under Theodoric. The chronicler would have it that "the two nations of Romans and Goths were blended into one."[26] This was true in that both were obliged to contribute to the wants or to the splendors of their common sovereign. The Goths were taxed, for instance, as well as the Italians.[27] But no one could believe, however much he might be gratified to fancy that there was any actual equal-

[23] "Non facile datur intelligi," wrote the indignant Bishop of Vienne in Gaul, "qua vel ratione vel lege ab inferioribus eminentior judicatur." Avitus, Ep. 31.

[24] From 484 to 519. In the former year, Felix, the second Roman Bishop of that name, excommunicated Acacius, Bishop of Constantinople. Ap. Conc., tom. v. pp. 177, 217 *et seq.* How the war was stayed, see Ep. Hormisd., 28 *et seq.*, ap. Conc., tom. v. pp. 606 *et seq.*

[25] It is singular to note at this very period the first instances in which the Pallium was sent from Rome to the chief prelates of the West. Symm., Ad Theod. Laur., ap. Conc., tom. v. p. 440.

[26] "In uno Romanorum et Gothorum." Exc. e Lib. Chron., p. 620. So Proc., Bell. Goth., I. 1.

[27] Manso (Gesch. des. Ost-Gothischen Reiches) cites Cassiod., Var., I. 19, IV. 14.

ity between the two races. The Goths alone were allowed to bear arms. These belonged to them as to the conquerors.[28] The Italians, as the servants of the conquerors, had the robe, the pen, the tool. "The good Goth," said Theodoric, "must not imitate the Roman."[29] There was little temptation to do so.

Theodoric was not contented with supremacy over his Goths and Italians. Nor did the subjects whom he acquired on the upper borders of Italy satisfy him. He looked northward and westward for new hosts, new realms to rule. To undertake their subjugation by force was hopeless. It was less so to try the effect of intrigues and alliances. No other monarch of the time was so widely connected with his contemporary sovereigns. He espoused a sister of Clovis the Frank. A sister of his own became queen of the Vandals. One of his daughters was married to Alaric, king of the Visigoths. Another was given to Sigismund, king of the Burgundians. When nearer relatives failed, he called into requisition his nieces, one of whom was sent away as a spouse to the chieftain of the Thuringians.[30] These marriages greatly increased the influence of Theodoric. Some of his brother chieftains, it is true, heeded him no more as a kinsman than as a ruler. But others who would have paid little reverence to him as the king of Italy, submitted to him as the

[28] See further proofs of the same superiority in Cass., Var., v. 30, VII. 3, IX. 24.

[29] Exc. e Lib. Chron., p. 621.

[30] Proc., Bell. Goth., I. 12. Exc. e Lib. Chron., pp. 621, 622. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 58. See the letter accompanying the niece, ap. Cass., Var., IV. 1.

head of the house from which their queens were descended.

He did not confine himself to making marriages. His envoys, bearing sometimes commands, sometimes expostulations, sometimes promises, were continually employed in the management of surrounding nations. Nor did he always make the first advances. Tribute was brought to him from races, homage was rendered to him by rulers too remote to be numbered amongst the invaders of the age. From such the Ostrogoth was glad to receive, without requiring allegiance. But from the tribes established upon the imperial territories, he was impatient to exact submission. Hardly had he gained his throne, when he despatched an embassy to Clovis, king of the Franks. To him, flushed with victory over the Alemanni, the embassy bore no light demand from the Ostrogoth. To urge the Frank to spare the enemy whom he had vanquished was equivalent to almost any claim that could have been made upon the obsequiousness of a gentler monarch. Yet this was what Theodoric not only urged, but obtained.[31] To make return, or else to retain his control over the Frank, the Ostrogoth soon afterwards took part in a war with the Burgundians.[32]

But were the schemes of Theodoric to succeed? Was the Arian to triumph over the Northern Christians as over the Roman? Was the invader by whom the ancient centralization had been laid low

[31] 496. Cass., Var., II. 41.

[32] 500. Proc., Bell. Goth., I. 12. The war resulted in the promise of tribute from the Burgundian chieftain to the Frank. Greg. Tur., II. 32.

to raise a new centralization of his own? Grave doubts must have arisen as to the future success of the Ostrogoth. It could not have been generally believed that he was fated to obtain a power in comparison with which the Empire of Rome would have been a trifling dominion. Still less generally could it have been thought that the monarch rejecting the Catholic claims would triumph where those claims had been most securely established. True that Arians were now the masters of the greater part of the West. But the Catholic faith was beginning to reassert itself. The Burgundians were Catholic. Clovis the Frank was a Catholic likewise.

It was through Clovis that the course of Theodoric first met with decided interruptions. All had gone well with the plans of the Ostrogoth until he pushed his precedence so far, apparently, that the Frank broke out into resistance. Deep, however, is the shade upon their persons and their movements. It may have been that Clovis, pressing his own schemes, took the aggressive. But however the conflict began, Clovis and Theodoric were thenceforward arrayed against each other as the leading combatants of the period.

Clovis had succeeded to the authority of his father about the same time[33] that Theodoric became chieftain of the Ostrogoths. The ten years which the latter spent before winning his Italian kingdom were employed by Clovis in extending his do-

[33] 481. Greg. Tur., II. 27.

mains[34] until they reached the river Loire.[35] Of all the Northern leaders none had appeared more daring or more unscrupulous in arms. None had ever been followed by a more terrible host than that which Clovis led, plundering and destroying, as it wrought victory upon victory.[36] Amongst these triumphs were those gained over the Alemanni and the Burgundians.[37] The Franks became the predominant conquerors in Gaul.

Some years before his great victories, the Frank chieftain had taken to wife a niece of the reigning Burgundian. From the day of her marriage, Clotilda undertook the conversion of her impetuous lord to the Catholic faith which she professed. Clovis, intent upon points of warfare, cared little for points of doctrine. He allowed his queen to educate her children as she pleased; but for himself, he had no idea of yielding to the persuasions of a woman or of the priests whom she revered. With all the ardor of her race, all the tenderness of her sex, Clotilda continued to urge the fiery Frank to declare himself a Catholic. Whether he was touched or awed, he remembered her expostulations where he seemed most likely to forget them, on the field of battle. He appealed to the God of Clotilda to give him victory. Yet though the

[34] "The seat of the Franks appears clearly to have been established at Cambray before the middle of the fifth century." Hallam's Suppl. Notes, p. 4.

[35] The solitary "Roman" general, Syagrius, was defeated in 486. Greg. Tur., II. 27.

[36] Id., ib. Hincmar, ap. Marlot, Hist. de Reims, tom. II. p. 64. "Alii," says Isidore (Orig., IX. 2) "eos Francos a feritate morum nuncupatos existimant."

[37] Besides his campaigns against these nations, Clovis made an expedition against the towns of Armorica or Brittany. Proc., Bell. Goth., I. 12.

appeal appeared to be answered, Clovis still hesitated to declare himself converted. It might cost him his throne. Nor did he venture to come out as a Catholic until a large number of his warriors had been induced to imitate his example.[38] With them, he submitted to baptism.

"Bend thy head," exclaimed Remigius, Bishop of Reims, in administering the rite, "bend, destroy what thou hast been worshipping, and worship what thou hast been destroying!"[39] It was the turning-point in the destinies not only of Clovis but of his nation, and not only of his nation, but of humanity.

He had not been converted to the Catholic faith in its purity. It came to him in the midst of its perils and of his battles. He could not receive it as a follower of the law of love. Nor could it present itself simply as the law of love. "Had I and my Franks been there," he cried, when told of the Crucifixion, "we would have avenged His injuries!"[40] Nor did he cease to regard the God whom he acknowledged as a Deity who delighted in the service of warriors. Marching against one of the nations with whom he fought, he found himself delayed by the difficulty of crossing a swollen stream. "That night," says the historian of the Franks, "Clovis prayed the Lord that He would deign to show some ford by which the river might

[38] 496. Greg. Tur., II. 31. Vit. Remig., cited by Thierry, Lettre VI. Sur l'Hist. de France.

[39] Greg. Tur., II. 31.

[40] "Jam fidem," adds the chronicler, "his verbis ostendens Christianum se verum esse adfirmat." Fredeg., Greg. Tur. Epit., 21.

be crossed. So in the morning, agreeably to the will of God, a stag of wonderful size enters the river, and crossing before the people, shows them likewise how to cross."[41] The faith adopted by the Frank had no opposition to make to his love of warfare. Nor did it refuse to blend itself with the religion which he had formerly professed. Years afterwards, his people are described as "using human sacrifices and other equally unlawful ceremonies."[42] It seems as if the Frank had been a Catholic only in name. So he was, if to be a Catholic was to be meek or spiritual. But this was not the standard of the times. It was enough to acknowledge the Catholic power in order to be acknowledged as a Catholic believer. In this view, Clovis was a Catholic in deed as well as in name.

His conversion was hailed with exultation not only by the Catholics of Gaul[43] but by those of Rome.[44] They caught at the opportunity of raising themselves above their invaders and their persecutors. "You must honor your priests," wrote Bishop Remigius, the Apostle, as he has been called, of the Franks,[45] "and you must have continual recourse to their advice. If you act according to this, your dominion will be the greater."[46] The wiser prelates were content with making these in-

[41] Greg. Tur., II. 37.

[42] *Θυσίαις τε χρώμενοι ἀνθρώπων καὶ ἄλλα οὐχ ὅσια ἱερεύοντες.* Proc., Bell. Goth., II. 25.

[43] See Avitus, Ep. 51.

[44] See the letter of the Roman Bishop Anastasius ap. Conc., tom. v. p. 410.

[45] "L'apostre des Français. . . . . L'astre brillant de notre église, le père des rois et l'ange tutélaire de toute la France." Marlot, Hist. de Reims, Somm. du v^e^ Livre.

[46] Ap. Conc., tom. v. p. 540.

junctions. The mass of the Catholics, however, went farther. There seems to have been no end of the mysteries, not to use any other word, by which they sought to regain the upper hand.[47] To all this, Clovis continued sensitive. He believed in the miracle. He trusted in the warning. The Catholics found him credulous and submissive. He looked up to them, or to their leaders, as his guides and prophets. Had they urged their influence too far, it would have been shattered. Had they commanded Clovis to give up battles or murders, he would have turned upon them with dangerous scorn. But they were content to see him slaying and warring so that he respected them, their brethren and their possessions. This he was willing to do. He was willing to do more. He fought for the Catholic cause as well as for his own. "It vexeth me sorely," he said to his warriors in speaking of the Visigoths, "that these Arians should have a hold upon Gaul. Let us march with the help of God, and make the land our own."[48] In making it their own, the Franks and their chieftain were restoring Gaul to the Catholic power.

Here lay the contrast between Clovis and Theodoric. The Ostrogoth was building up his authority in defiance of the Catholic power. The Frank, serving this power, obtained it as his ally. All the more jealous was either monarch of the pretensions of the other. The Frank saw only evil in

[47] The councils of the time are obliged to interfere. Conc. Agath., c. 42, p. 528, c. 68, p 532; Conc. Aurel., c. 30, p. 548, all ap. Conc., tom. v.

[48] Greg. Tur., II. 37.

the progress which the Ostrogoth was making towards a general supremacy. He dreaded Theodoric as an opponent in religion. He hated him as an opponent in dominion. Clovis determined to strike the first blow. To march against the Visigoths, whom he determined to assail, was to march against Theodoric, whose daughter had been given in marriage to the Visigothic king. In vain did Theodoric attempt to interfere.[49] Nothing remained but war. It was about fifteen years from the conquest of Italy by the Ostrogoth, about ten from the conversion of the Frank.

Despite all the remonstrances of Theodoric, the Frank was joined by some of his former enemies. Before the forces of the Ostrogoth could reach the scene of action, the Visigothic king perished in battle near Poitiers.[50] To check the conquerors was not all that Theodoric found it necessary to do. He had to interfere amongst the conquered, in order to secure the rights of his grandchild as the legitimate heir to the throne. Spreading his troops over the Visigothic territories, he took possession of what had not been conquered. The successes of his generals against the Franks prevented any further losses on the part of his allies. Theodoric, in fact, had become the ruler of the Visigoths.[51] It seemed as if he, rather than Clovis, was the gainer by the war.

But the Frank had made great conquests. These, moreover, he held in his own name, or in that

[49] Cass., Var., III. 4.
[50] 507. Greg. Tur., II. 37.
[51] Proc., Bell. Goth., I. 13. He had his viceroy — "Theodes suus Armiger." Jorn., De Reb. Get., 58.

of his nation, and not, as Theodoric held his Visigothic realms, in the name of another monarch. All that lay on the southern side of the Frank kingdom had been joined to it securely. On the other side, a hold had been gained upon the Burgundian kingdom. With these gains Clovis returned from the recent war. He completed his work of blood by the murder of several chieftains of his own race.[52]

As a monarch, Clovis followed very different principles from those of his great antagonist. No ruler of the period showed so little disposition to employ the fragments of the ancient centralization in constituting his own government. Not until the last year of his reign did Clovis seem to bend before the shadows of the imperial institutions. Then the title and insignia of the consulate, forwarded from the Eastern court, were received with the utmost delight. "From that time," says the old chronicler, "he liked to be called Consul and Augustus."[53] During all but the few months closing his reign Clovis had ruled in defiance of every honor as of every precedent to be derived from the Roman system. He had no wish on his own part to borrow from those whom he had conquered. Nor would his Franks have allowed him to do so. Not only did they pride themselves on their superiority to the Romans; but they were so divided,[54] so undisci-

[52] Greg. Tur., II. 40 – 42.

[53] Greg. Tur., II. 38. Hallam, Suppl. Notes, note 4.

[54] "La distinction des Francs-Ripuaires et des Francs-Saliens vous est connue: c'étaient les deux principales tribus, ou plutôt, les deux principales collections de tri-

plined,[55] as to have been unmanageable according to any Roman principles of government. Perhaps the Catholics in whom Clovis trusted opposed any tendency to restore the old order of things. They may have preferred the new.

All this was confirming the doom of the Roman centralization. But the immediate consequences were not the less painful to the Roman subjects of the Frank. Nowhere did the vanquished suffer more keenly than where Clovis was the victor. The eminence of the priesthood seems only to have left the people more degraded in their subjugation.[56] Had the imperial policy found greater favor with the conqueror, there might have been a greater number of the conquered to escape the extremities of subjection. But it would have closed the future against their descendants. The existence of liberty depended upon the overthrow of centralization.

Clovis had no sooner died, than three of the four sons to whom he bequeathed his kingdom[57] were obliged to unite in repelling the Ostrogothic forces. Theodoric still lived to carry on the schemes which the Frank had been instrumental in checking. But

bus de la grande confédération des Francs." Guizot, Civ. en France, x^e^ Leçon.

[55] The well known story of the vase which Clovis wanted as his share of the spoils is in Greg. Tur., II. 27.

[56] The clergy appear to have discouraged their brethren from flocking into the priesthood. A canon of a council at Orleans held in the year of Clovis's death, orders "ut nullus sæcularium ad clericatus officium præsumatur, nisi aut cum regis jussione aut cum judicis voluntate." Conc. Aur., c. 4, p. 544, Ap. Conc., tom. v. See Sismondi's citations touching the admission of the higher classes into the priesthood. Hist. de France, tom. I. p. 199, note.

[57] On the division, see Fauriel, Hist. de la Gaule Mérid., tom. II. ch. 14. It was in 511. Greg. Tur., II. 43, III. 1.

though thus hasty to profit by the death of his adversary, though assailing the Burgundians[58] as well as the Franks, the Ostrogoth was still hindered in his attempts at universal sovereignty. Yet he ruled a wide dominion. From the Western ocean to the Illyrian and Pannonian frontier,[59] the Ostrogoth was the acknowledged sovereign. Possessed of wider sway than had belonged to any single ruler for full a century, Theodoric lived to carry his monarchy to the acme of its power.

Its oppression increased with its sway. No class escaped the violence of the Ostrogothic king except the warriors from whom his means of inflicting violence were derived. Even on them he imposed heavier burdens, as has been related, than others of the Northern warriors had yet endured. His ministers suffered more severely. Taken from the Italians, they were obliged to render the most untiring services. When they wearied their master, he dispatched them by the most summary sentences. Boëthius, the very officer on whom Theodoric had most relied in the development of his policy, was murdered on the charge of having attempted to liberate his country.[60] The liberty of the will, wrote the condemned minister while in prison, will remain in spite of human despotism.[61] The Catholics were

[58] Jorn., De Reb. Get., 58. Greg. Tur., III. 23.

[59] He had gone to war with the Eastern Empire in 505. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 58.

[60] And Boëthius confesses that he had often protected his countrymen. De Cons. Phil., lib. I. p. 15, ed. Paris. He was Theodoric's Magister Officiorum. Exc. e Lib. Chron., p. 626.

[61] De Cons. Phil., v. ad fin. Symmachus, the father-in-law of Boëthius, was slain for lamenting his death. Exc. e Lib. Chron., p. 627.

especially the victims of Theodoric's later cruelties. The highest prelate in the Visigothic territories, Cæsarius of Arles, was transported to Ravenna to stand his trial for treason.[62] John, Bishop of Rome, was forced to go on an embassy to Constantinople in order to sustain the Arians of the East against imperial hostilities.[63] The envoy returned to die in custody at Ravenna.[64] Theodoric finally prepared for a general persecution of his Catholic subjects.[65] But death cut short his deeds of blood.[66]

His dominion might have seemed likely to endure long after he had been called away. But it bore all the elements of decay. Founded in bloodshed, by bloodshed likewise had it been extended. So, it may be said, was the dominion of Clovis. But the sway of the Frank promised to continue. He had cemented it by alliance with the Catholic power. The renunciation of that power had loosened the sway of Theodoric. All that he had taken to support himself were scattered relics of the imperial centralization. His kingdom might continue for a while. But it would not endure, and grow as it endured, like that of his antagonist in the West.

Yet why should resistance to the Catholic power portend the downfall of the Ostrogoth? Why

[62] Cypr. et al., Vit. Cæs., ap. Bolland., Acta SS., Aug. 27, lib. I. cap. III. Cæsarius had been transported to Bordeaux by Alaric, the last king of the Visigoths. Iid., ib., lib. I. cap. 2.

[63] Exc. e Lib. Chron., p. 626.

[64] Ib., p. 627. Hist. Misc., xv. p. 103.

[65] Exc. e. Lib. Chron., p. 627.

[66] 526. One grandson succeeded to the Italian, another to the Visigothic throne. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 58, 59.

should subserviency to the same power assure the endurance of the Frank? Because the Catholic system, notwithstanding its imperfection, comprehended all the materials for progress towards future perfection. Particularly was this the case with regard to human liberty. The Church Universal was the heir of the martyrs and of the teachers, as well as of the prelates and the rulers belonging to preceding ages. The teachers and the martyrs, especially of the Catholics, were they who had done the most to maintain the principles of liberty proclaimed by Christ. The nation submitting to these principles, however altered by rulers and by prelates, bade fair to endure. The nation rejecting them, when there were no others of greater purity, was doomed to fall.

Then why, it may be asked, had not the Roman Christians been sufficient to continue the development of liberty? They had reared the Catholic power. It had been assailed by almost all the Northern Christians. Why had these, therefore, swept the Empire? The answer to these interrogatories is plain. The Roman Christians had abandoned, as it were, the liberty allowed by the Catholic system. They had sunk into virtual servitude. The inroads of the Northern Christians had aroused them, while the institutions above them assumed a new aspect in the relations created by the same invasions. The present position of the Catholic power was not that of an oppressive, but of a protective dominion. Beneath it, the Roman and the Northern Christians were already to a cer-

tain degree united. Beneath it, their descendants would advance, for a time at least, towards liberty.

The Catholics of the period perceived themselves occupying a vantage-ground. A leader like Avitus of Vienne stands as if persuaded of the course appointed unto human destinies. To the Arian king he cries, "Return, return with your people, to the law of God, and He will give peace in your borders!"[67] To the Catholic monarch he writes, "I am as one of your own subjects, rejoicing in your victories. . . . . While we commit our fortunes to the future, we already see some ray of interpenetrating light. . . . . Your faith is our victory!"[68] "And beyond all these tossings," declares the prophet to his people, "ye may hope for that haven where ye shall find tranquillity."[69]

[67] Ep. 28. Coll. Episc., ap. Conc., tom. v. pp. 451 *et seq.*

[68] Ep. 41.

[69] Ep. 34.

CHAPTER VIII.

POLITICAL PREPARATIONS.

"Use all lawful instruments, but expect nothing from them above their natural or ordinary efficacy, and in the use of them from God expect a blessing."

JEREMY TAYLOR, *Holy Living*, Ch. IV. Sect. 2.

IT was only after the lapse of years that the changes wrought by the Northern Christians would appear. The period in which they fought, conquered and ruled was one of transition. Their combats were gained, their conquests were achieved for those who were to come after them rather than for themselves. So too, the institutions which they reared seemed less adapted to complete the present than to prepare the future.

The political preparations thus made involved the use of various forms and various materials. What had been in vogue with the Roman Christians was affected by their defeat. At the same time, what had prevailed among the Northern Christians had been affected by their triumph. Neither the new elements nor the old could work alone. To be efficacious in the sight either of the victors or of

the vanquished, they needed to be blended. The materials of the South were as essential as those of the North. The forms of Northern growth were not more requisite than those of Roman.

First of the ancient elements to be employed was the law of Rome. Issuing from the different systems of antiquity, it had diffused itself over the imperial realms during the early centuries of our era. Amidst the convulsions terminating the Western Empire, its subjects clung to its statutes as to the last political supports which they could bear to lose. Its very conquerors, reckless of ruin as they were, seemed to stand in awe of the ordinances that had endured for ages, "the laws of the Barbarians," as one of the Northern legislators declared, "as well as of the Romans."[1] Some of the victors, like the author of this declaration, Theodoric the Ostrogoth, introduced the Roman law into their codes on equal terms with their own statutes.[2] Others, like the Frank,[3] the Visigothic[4] and the Burgundian[5] monarchs, while leaving the Roman law to the Roman population, imitated its provisions in the codes of their own races. So far as the ancient law contributed to the maintenance of order, it formed the groundwork upon which all

[1] "Quæ Barbari quoque sequi debeant." Edict. Theod., ad init. So Exc. e Lib. Chron., p. 620.

[2] As before. The date of the Ostrogothic code is 500.

[3] "Inter Romanos," says the Const. Cloth. Reg., (ap. Conc., tom. VI. p. 506), "negotia causarum Romanis legibus præcipimus terminari."

[4] In the code, commonly called Breviarium Alarici, but more properly, Lex Romana, which dates from 506.

[5] In the Papiniani Responsa, properly again, Lex Romana, dating from 517.

future law would rest. Nor was there any earthly foundation on which all future liberty would more securely repose. The law of Rome had sanctioned the worst oppression. But when its framers yielded to their Northern conquerors, the law that had been the instrument of oppression became one of resistance, of maintenance, of deliverance.[6] Without its existence, the Romans might have been not only enslaved, but annihilated.

Roman law applied to all classes. The next fragment from the past related to the middle classes, if so they may be called. This was the Municipality or Curia. Greatly, however, had both the aspect and the actual working of this been lightened. It was still the agent of taxation. But the new rulers had fewer wants to be supplied than their imperial predecessors. The courts of the Northern kings were less prodigal. Their officers, military and civil, were less grasping. Their proletaries were less numerous, their subjects generally were less helpless. So that not nearly so much was exacted from the Curia by its conquerors as by its former oppressors. At the same time, the system of assessing and collecting the taxes was materially improved. Instead of the Curials being solely accountable for the revenues due from their respective districts, the Counts, that is, the higher officers of the different kingdoms, were obliged to repair the deficiencies in the returns.[7]

[6] As in the instance of the Burgundian. "Burgundionibus leges mitiores .... ne in Romanos opprimerent." Greg. Tur., II. 33.

[7] Lehuërou, Inst. Mérov. et Carol., tom. I. pp. 309–311. As to how the Curia acted under the Counts, see the letter of Athalaric, ap. Cass., Var., IX. 1.

The member of the Curia, therefore, found himself standing on new ground. A greater number shared his responsibilities. A greater importance was attached to his privileges.[8] Thus while the ancient institution was retained, it was also dignified and expanded.

The position of the clergy was another of the former elements that entered into the political preparations of the time. What the priesthood had been in the day of the Roman Christians, they remained in that of the Northern Christians. They were counsellors to the rulers. To the subjects they were protectors. The harder the struggle to continue in these relations, as under the Ostrogothic monarchy, the more necessary did the clergy find it to assert their powers. The more remarkable their ascendancy, as under the Frank monarchy,[9] the more active were they in exercising the authority so decisively acknowledged.[10] To imagine them a merely religious body would be to misapprehend both them and those around them. They were priests, ministers, instructors; but they were also officers and rulers. The political influence thus exerted by them can hardly be over-estimated. Conceive them as the maintainers of what had been,

[8] See Savigny's admirable account with its citations. Hist. Rom. Law in the Middle Ages, ch. 5.

[9] On their continued immunities, see Greg. Tur., III. 25, IV. 2; Conc. Aur., ap. Conc., tom. v. pp. 543 *et seq.*

[10] The tenth canon of a council at Orleans (ap. Conc., tom. v. p. 1379) makes the consent of the king necessary to the ordination of the Bishop. But the eighth canon of a council at Paris (Ib., tom. VI. p. 495) goes exactly the other way.

as the conservative order in an age of destruction;[11] and the part which they sustained will be seen to have been no trifling one in the political preparations for the future.

The ancient centralization had been overwhelmed. It could not recover itself, certainly not at this period, either in the State or in the Church. The Catholic centralization, a system of oppressiveness, had given way to the Catholic power, a system, in the main, of protectiveness. The imperial centralization had disappeared throughout the West. In place of a single sovereignty enthroned in its single or its separate capitals, there had arisen a number of principalities, each with its different centre. Nevertheless, the centralization, both imperial and Catholic, that had prevailed, was not obliterated. The vase that had held it, was broken; but some of its essence found its way into the vessels containing the principles that were to prevail at a later era. The clergy reassumed many of the claims to which centralization alone could entitle them. The monarchs donned many of the prerogatives with which centralization alone could invest them.

Such, in general, were the Roman contributions to the future. All that had belonged to the conquered was laid at the feet of their conquerors. The conquerors chose what they would have. They then determined how they would have what they saw fit to have at all. Thus to a certain degree the

[11] As with relation to the Roman law, — "Legem Romanam qua Ecclesia vivit," says the Lex Ripuar., LVIII. 1.

Roman contributions became Northern ones. There were others exclusively Northern.

Chief of these was a principle opposed to centralization. This was the prominence of the individual. Where the Roman system had begun with the State, proceeding thence to the persons composing the State, the Northern system began with the persons. To protect each one of these, supposing them to be recognized as entitled to protection, was the great object of all the Northern codes. Nor are their provisions in this respect confined to the races whose name they bear. The Roman, the still inferior classes, have their share of protection, though it be a smaller share than that obtained by the conquerors. No order stands higher than that of the clergy, Roman as it was. The law of the Alemanni begins with the Bishop, with whom it ranks only the Duke, that is, the next to the king.[12] From them, the law descends to the Priest and Deacon, after whom it recognizes the freeman, whether warrior or not, and beneath him, the bondman.[13] The codes of the Franks place the Bishop highest. But the Roman is placed lowest.[14] It was inevitable that the vanquished, as a mass, would be ranked below their victors. That they should have been admitted to any rank is a proof of the importance attached to the individual by the Northern nations.

There are other proofs to the same effect. The sex accustomed to subjection amongst the Christians

[12] Lex Alem., XII. 1.

[13] Ib., XIII. 2, XIV., LXVIII. 1, 2, 4 *et seq.*

[14] Lex Sal., XLVI. 1 *et seq.*, LVIII. 5. Lex Rip., XXXVI. 9, 3.

of Rome was elevated amongst those of the North. Not, indeed, that woman was raised above degradation. In some particulars, she was regarded with the contempt and treated with the severity that must have generally preceded the conversion of her race to gentler and truer views.[15] Yet women were protected in rights that had long been violated, in sensibilities that had long been outraged.[16] They pass from the service into the companionship of men. Clovis, in becoming a convert, yields to the entreaties of his queen.[17] Theodoric trusts to marriages as means to secure his system of domination. Sending his niece to wed the Thuringian chieftain, he exclaims, "Happy Thuringia! Happy in having one both cultivated and learned, noble, likewise, not only in birth, but in the dignity of woman!"[18]

What the Northern Christians thus allowed to woman was not so remarkable as their concessions to the slave. He is not emancipated by the law of the victors. As they held slaves before, so were these held by them after their conversion and their conquests. Yet the codes starting with the rights of the individual could not but lighten the condition of

[15] "Les maximes des Francs et des barbares en général sur la dépendance des femmes étaient plus sévères encore que les lois des Romains." Naudet, De l'Etat des Personnes en France, Mém. de l'Institut, Insc. et B. Lett., tom. VIII. p. 489. "Ils ne lui accordaient pas de droits personnels." Mignet, sur l'Introd. des Anc. Germ., Mém. de l'Inst., Sc. Mor. et Pol., tom. III. p. 791, 2e série.

[16] The Salic law (XXXII. 5) declares it punishable "si quæ mulier ingenua aut vir mulierem meretricem clamaverit."

[17] A still higher position fell to the Anglo-Saxon queens. See Lappenberg's England under the Angl. Sax. Kings, vol. II. p. 310, Eng. trans.

[18] "Non solum genere quantum et fæminea dignitate." Ap Cass., Var., IV. 1.

the bondman. The laws, though hesitating to control the power of the master, are from the first decided in protecting the slave against all besides the master. He is not to be struck with impunity.[19] Any injury to his person is to be fully recompensed.[20] Even his honor, that, too, of his sister or his wife, is guarded under heavy penalties.[21] It was reserved for the Northern codes to protect the slave even against his master.

"Inasmuch," declares the law of the Visigoths, "as the lives of slaves are often taken by the presumption of cruel masters, without any public trial, it is necessary that such lawlessness should be altogether extirpated, and that the requirements of the present law should be forever observed. To wit, that no master or mistress shall venture to despatch his or her bondman or bondwoman, or any person whatsoever, except trial shall have been publicly held. If the said bondman or bondwoman, or person whatsoever, shall commit a crime for which he or she may be called to answer with life, and if he or she shall be slain, or caused to be slain by the said master or mistress, then any magistrate shall see that the said master or mistress is brought to trial. . . . . For if any shall dare to slay his bondman in cold blood, either by his own hand or by the hand of another, without public procedure, he shall pay a pound of gold to the treasury, besides being branded with perpetual infamy, and being deprived

[19] Lex Alem., xcv. 3. Lex Rip., XIX.

[20] Lex Rip., VIII.

[21] Lex Sal., XXVII. Edict. Theod., XXI.

of the right to testify." It was with still heavier penalties that the life of the slave was protected against others besides his master. He who should kill another's slave must make reparation to the owner by delivering to him two "of the same value" as the murdered bondman, at the same time that he made reparation to the State by undergoing "perpetual exile." [22]

To assure the advance thus achieved by the Northern Christians, the Catholic power issued ordinances of its own. A council in Gaul condemns "any one who has killed his slave without the knowledge of a magistrate" to "an excommunication or a penance of two years' duration." [23] The sentence is reiterated by another council held a few years later. [24]

Let us not, however, be deceived. While the condition of the slave was thus relieved, the number of the enslaved was undoubtedly increased by the invasions from the North. It could not but be so. The liberty that might have been added to the Romans, had they been free, was rather taken from many of them in consequence of their total unfitness for freedom. [25] A description of the fall of great numbers into servitude, about half a century before, applies to the reverses of those who came after. "As is usual," writes the Catholic of Marseilles, "with such as are urged by fear of the foe, they betake

[22] Lex Visig., lib. vi. tit. v. 12.

[23] 506. Conc. Agd., c. 62, ap. Conc., tom. v. p. 531.

[24] 517. Conc. Epaon., c. 34, ap. Conc., tom. v. p. 716.

[25] "Une nation libre," says Montesquieu, (Esp. des Lois, Liv. xix. ch. 27,) "peut avoir un libérateur; une nation subjuguée ne peut avoir qu'un autre oppresseur."

themselves to places of refuge. Some, bereft of all freedom and safety, fly in desperation to any asylum whatsoever. . . . . Driven not only from their possessions, but from themselves, and losing all they have together with themselves, they forfeit both their property and their right to liberty. . . . . This is the more distressing, inasmuch as it is increased by a graver affliction. For such men are received as fugitives, they are deprived of the privileges belonging to those born upon the soil, and according to the style of that evil-working one who was said to transform men into beasts, so all those who are settled upon the lands of the powerful, are changed as by the transfiguration of the Circean cup. For whom the powerful receive as strangers and aliens, these they soon hold as their own. They who are known to be free are changed into slaves." [26]

It is the dark side of the picture that is thus drawn. There can be no doubt of its truth. The slave, the woman, and the individual, whether Northern or Roman, must have often suffered from the vicissitudes of a period so interrupted, so convulsed. But it is equally true that the Northern element of regard for the individual, extending, as we have seen, to the feeblest and to the lowest, was working its part in the political preparations for the future.

From the laws concerning persons the next step is to such as concern their possessions. Here the

[26] Salv., De Gub. Dei, lib. v. pp. 172, 173. This reads like an explanation of serfdom, that is, of its origin. See Biot, Abol. de l'Esclavage, pp. 257 *et seq.*

lower and the feebler classes are seen declining as unsuited to hold property. Here, too, the Romans, or the great mass of them, appear thrust down to an inferior place, as unfitted to retain any extensive possessions. Some of the victors allowed no claims on the part of the vanquished to their former domains. Others left a third of each estate in possession of the conquered.[27] But the tenure of the proprietor, however impoverished might be the Roman, however enriched might be the Northerner, was one and the same. He held his lands not as a ruler or as a citizen, but as a man. His property depended on his nature, on his capacity, rather than on his station or his name. Of course the member of the victorious race was invested with a larger territory than one of the nation whom he had conquered. But it was because his superiority as a warrior entitled him to superiority as a proprietor. Of course, too, there were some amongst the conquerors to whom a smaller portion of land was assigned than to others. But it was because they were personally inferior. The leader had the lion's share. But the retainer was equally sure of the share befitting him. The retainer held his land of the leader. It was on condition of the personal service rendered by the inferior to the superior. The latter held his land of the nation. It was on a similar condition of the personal service which he would render to the nation. However property might be

[27] Lex Vis., x. 1. 8. Lex Burg., liv. 1. Still more was conceded subsequently. Lex Burg., Add., ii. 11.

divided, whether allodial or beneficiary,[28] the secret of the title was uniform. The famous law forbidding any woman to inherit Salic land[29] recurs in other codes.[30] It confirms the fact that the proprietor held his rights not as of this nation or of that one, not as of this rank or of that one, but as an individual, whose powers were the securities of his possessions.

This may be set down as the second great advance accomplished by the Northern races. It was unquestionably modified by the disturbances of the age in which it took effect. He who was able to be a proprietor might be an oppressor. He who could not become a proprietor might be oppressed. But the fact that the rights of property depended upon personal energies was assured. That it was so, proves the way to have been open to the humblest, few as there were to see it or to pursue it to their advantage.

From the proprietors we may turn to the freemen recognized by the Northern codes. The liberty of the Northern races, in their earlier abodes, was little more than the ability to draw their swords or to elect their chieftains. But the conquerors of the Roman territories had found abiding-places where the relations of peace were mingled in increasing proportions with those of warfare.

[28] "Lands were originally held by each soldier as his own, allodial, his share of the spoil on the first conquest of a country. In the next place, lands were held as beneficia, lands given by the king, or leader." Smyth's Lect. on Mod. Hist., Lect. II.

[29] Lex Sal., LXII. 6.

[30] Lex Rip., LVI. 3. Lex Angl. et Werin., i. e. Thuringorum, VI. 1. Lex Sax., VII. 1.

The freeman of the nation settled upon its conquered territory was a different being from him of an earlier generation when conquests were still to be made. Now he was free, if free at all, not only to conquer, but to labor, to cultivate, to improve; not only to elect a leader, but to have a governor, nay, to be himself a legislator and a ruler. Whoever had the claim to the name of a freeman had the claim to these extended privileges.

In all the institutions growing out of the conquests that had been made, the conquerors participated at first on equal terms. The member of the hundred, or of the primary district, whatever it might be called, exercised an individual authority in collecting the revenue, administering justice or organizing the military force belonging to the nation. Each district had its superior, each, moreover, was included with other districts in the county or in the division, however it might be entitled, over which presided a still higher official, like the Count of the Franks or the Ealdorman of the Saxons.[31] But the power vested in the division or the district remained in the hands of its members at large. So with the assembly to which the freemen repaired from their counties or their hundreds. Gathered, every man with his own rights and his own powers, they would hesitate at no exercise of independence or of authority. Nor would any chieftain dare to dispute their course.

[31] See Sir Francis Palgrave on the Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth, ch. III.

As well might the freshet have been stayed in the early spring.

The time came, however, when the waters subsided. The national assembly began to show symptoms of decline. Its members, scattered over a larger space, could no longer come together in the same numbers as of old. Nor were their spirits equal to the prerogatives which they or their predecessors had exercised. In every division, as in every district, the power once held by many, was passing into the hands of a few. To these was attached a body of vassals, formerly the voluntary retainers of the bravest, but now the involuntary dependants of the mightiest or the wealthiest above them. If the vassal came to the gathering no longer deserving, though retaining a national name, it was to vote or to act as his lord commanded. The lord himself cared little about meeting with his peers. He was not so great a personage amongst them as amongst his vassals, with whom, accordingly, he abode, waging war or maintaining peace much after his own desires. One portion of the aristocracy, as it may be termed, consisted of these isolated lords. The other comprised the smaller number still going up to the yearly or the more frequently recurring gathering. But when they arrived, they found themselves in anything but a national assembly. It was rather the retinue of a monarch.

The tendency from popular to aristocratical institutions was not so remarkable as that from aristocratical to monarchical. The leaders of the nation

had always constituted a body with at least the appearance of an aristocracy. But the chief among the leaders had not appeared to be a monarch. Nothing distinguished the king from the foremost warriors of the early generations, except that he was taken from a particular family, and in some cases supposed to be of divine origin. Yet the blood of the royal house formed but a doubtful title to the supremacy, unless confirmed by the personal prowess of those by whom it was reasserted. Then, and not till then, were they, in the true sense, kings, the able men of their race.[32] Even after the establishment of the nation upon the imperial soil, and in sight of the imperial power that had once existed, the king often found it difficult to maintain himself against his warriors.[33] They boasted of being as able as he, as fit, therefore, to govern themselves or him, as he was to govern them. But the influence of the ancient centralization soon made itself felt. The very air about its ruins was charged with impulses to the kingly authority. The homage to the Northern ruler began with his Roman subjects.[34] It was swelled ere long by his Northern ones.[35] The Northern chieftain became the European monarch.

[32] "The *Cyning* [king] was considered as the son or child of the nation." Allen on the Royal Prerogative, App., p. 176, 2d. ed.

[33] E. g. the weakness of Thierri, Greg. Tur., III. 41; or that of Clothaire, Id., IV. 14.

[34] See Guizot, Essais sur l'Hist. de France, pp. 146, 147, ed. 1845.

[35] "Il est vraisemblable que les successeurs de Clovis n'auraient attaqué, ni si promptement ni si hardiment, les libertés de la nation, si les grands . . . . eussent encore été tels dans les Gaules qu'ils avaient été en Germanie." Mably, Obs. sur l'Hist. de France, Liv. I. ch. 3. Guizot cites various instances from the code of the Ripuarian Franks. Civ. en France, Leç. x.

With the rise of the monarchy the assembly continued to change. The warriors of preceding periods made room for the superior officials and the superior prelates of their times. Then the warriors disappeared. The prelates and the officials, Bishops, Counts and Ealdormen, filled up the hall or the arena in which the people were nominally gathered. But it was the court of a monarch rather than the assembly of a nation that was thus constituted.

Such were the political preparations of the period. Our sketch of them has given nothing but the outlines. Yet the more indistinct these appear, the more true will they be to the times. Everything was in the disorder naturally resulting from the crash of institutions as they fell and as they rose. What was prepared is more easily told than what was actually achieved.[36]

Wilder and wilder becomes the view. Bonds lose their strength between nation and nation. Separated in war, the Northern, now the Western races seem equally separated in peace. The more settled they are upon their new territories, the more they differ from one another in customs and in laws. What the Roman subjects of the Franks preserve from their old codes is not the same as that preserved by the same class under the Goths. What the Goths adopt for their new codes is still less similar to that adopted by the Franks. These differences were enhanced by the right of every free-

36 "And still the *seed* we find,
Sown deep even in the bosom of the North." — Byron.

man to live by the laws of his own nation, though he had left it to dwell among strangers. "This we do appoint," declares the code of the Ripuarian Franks, "that all Franks, Burgundians, Alemans, and whoever there may be of any race residing within our realms, shall be bound by the law of the place where they were born."[37] Such separation of law from law and of nation from nation proves the reaction against the ancient centralization. But it proves as signally how far remote were men from the union on which modern liberty would one day be found to depend.

By what manner of men the preparations for the future were made appears from the prologue to the Salic law. It "is the renowned race of the Franks, existing by the grace of God, strong in arms, deep in counsels, faithful in covenants, noble in bodily proportions, fair and of beautiful form, both swift and stern." The nation makes its own laws by its own power and for its own progress. Yet the assertion of its independence is accompanied with assertions of its "obedience to piety." Christians, rude but earnest in believing, appear amongst the warriors by whom the new institutions are upreared. "Long live He who loves the Franks! Christ guard their kingdom! May He fill their chiefs with the light of His grace! May He protect their arms! May He grant defences to their faith! May the Lord Jesus Christ bestow the joys of peace and the seasons of prosperity upon our rulers!"[38]

[37] Lex Rip., xxxi. 3.

[38] Lex Sal., Prol. The two codes bearing the title of Salic, are given in Wiarda's Gesch. und Auslegung des Sal. Gesetzes.

From the reverence and the independence thus strikingly mingled we may judge through what immediate effects the preparations for coming times were made. "Avenge," cries Thierry the Frank king to his warriors, "avenge my injuries and the death of your kinsmen! Remember how violently they have been attacked and how great evils they have borne, how our hostages have been slain, our substance plundered, our children tortured and massacred. These are our wrongs. Let us march against our foes with the aid of God!"[39] The force that triumphed over the imperial centralization could not instantly subside.

[39] Greg. Tur., III. 7.

CHAPTER IX.

SPIRITUAL PREPARATIONS.

"La causa del clero era inseparabile da quella dei popoli."
ROMAGNOSI, *Dell' Incivilimento*, Parte II. cap. 4.

FAR more important than the political, were the spiritual preparations for the future. It was within the spirit that the seed of Christian liberty had been sown. It was there that the growth or the extinction of the seed would be decided. Nay more, it was according to the oppression or the freedom pervading the world within, that the liberty or the servitude of the world without would be determined.

To take the lead in preparations so momentous there were but few. What the Northern Christian regarded as spiritual, was rather ceremonial, not so much a part of inward as of outward faith. Still more external in character were the points of organization to which the Roman Christian turned as spiritual things. The unbeliever, whether Roman or Northern, seldom found himself impelled towards any spiritual considerations. Scanty, therefore, were

the numbers of those who could conduct the spiritual preparations of the future.

They were as divided, also, as they were scanty. Some sought materials for their labors from the fallen systems of which any fragments yet remained. Others strove to maintain themselves amidst the newly risen principles. But it was with various views and with various means. One portion would contend for the use of authority. Another would rely upon the efficacy of form. To this class, an imposing ritual was the most effective instrument. To the other, it was a majestic priesthood. There were variances of a doctrinal nature. Men differed about articles of theology or of morality more bitterly than about any other points upon which they could divide. The currents thus entering into the spiritual movements of the time, swelled with foreboding contentions.

We may begin with those deriving their sources from the past. Whatever may have been the faith of the Heathen, they still maintained their ceremonies[1] and their schools. Not long after the fall of the Emperors in the West, the philosopher Proclus died at Athens. To stuff the dry skin[2] of the ancient philosophy, Proclus had been obliged to borrow not only from the Heathen systems, but from the

[1] The code of Theodoric (c. VIII.) contains a prohibition of Heathen rites. A canon of a Western council declares against "Catholici qui ad idolorum cultum . . . . revertuntur." Conc. Aurel., ap. Conc., tom. v. p. 533. In the East, during the reign of Zeno, Severianus headed a conspiracy in favor of Heathenism. Phot., Cod., 242, p. 1072.

[2] As it was called by one of its whilom votaries, Synesius, Ep. 135.

Christian. He raised himself just high enough to discern that the principles of Intelligence and of Divinity, as he would phrase it, were above all things.[3] But he soon descended to maintain that no writings ought to be preserved besides the Oracles and the Timæus of his chosen master Plato.[4] A half a century later, the last of the Heathen teachers were deprived of their privileges by the Eastern Emperor.[5] The school at Athens was ordered to be closed, and seven philosophers, of whom Damascius was the head, went forth to seek safety in the Persian territories.[6] One of the exiles vented his resentment upon the institutions that allowed the souls of men to be assailed and the radiance of the Divinity to be obscured.[7] Simplicius had reason to be indignant at the persecution from which he and his comrades were suffering. Yet he, like Proclus, had already narrowed far more than any sovereign could do, the domain from which it angered him to be expelled.

To take the ground from which the Heathen were retreating, there were none but the new comers from the North. Few of these had any idea of spiritual matters. They who had the idea were still distant from the reality. Men of force that had proved irresistible, they seemed all the more helpless in a

[3] Proclus, De Prov., 18.

[4] Marin., Vit. Procl., 38. See Ritter et Preller, Hist. Phil. Gr. Rom., 534 *et seq.*

[5] Zonaras, XIV. 6. Proc., Hist. Arcan., 26, Aleman. Notæ, p. 459.

[6] Joannes Malalas, Chronogr., XVIII. p. 451, ed. Nieb. The exiles were soon allowed to return. Agathias, II. 30.

[7] Comment. in Enchir., ad fin.

spiritual point of view. It was by a slow process that they could attain to any spiritual development.

The first steps to it were taken in intellectual pursuits. Only, however, in the highest ranks amongst the Western races were there any signs even of intellectual cultivation. Theodoric the Ostrogoth, himself so ignorant that his countrymen reported his inability to sign his name,[8] was fond of encouraging learning in others.[9] A successor of his was a student of Plato.[10] One of the Frank kings affected jurisprudence;[11] another completed books of what he called poesy.[12] The more the new masters of the West could enlarge their minds, the more they could save their spirits from the infirmities that beleaguered them on all sides.

At the best, they could reach a state of spiritual preparation, and no more. "Is this the paradise you promised me?" asked Clovis of the Bishop Remigius, into whose church he was entering.[13] He could look no farther. But in looking even so far, the king proved himself susceptible of influences that might lead his successors to a clearer faith. The planet of superstition long held the ascendant. Sixty years after the conversion of Clovis, Carraric reigned

[8] Exc. e Lib. Chron., p. 624. Le Beau contradicts the reports of Theodoric's ignorance. So does his emendator St. Martin, ap. Le Beau, Hist. du Bas Empire, tom. VIII. p. 2, note.

[9] Cassiod., Var., II. 15. "Questo re," exclaims Denina, "che solamente da' barbari ingegni, potè meritarsi il nome di Barbaro." Riv. d' Italia, tom. II. p. 31.

[10] Proc., Bell. Goth., I. 6.

[11] Fortunatus, ap. Hist. Litt. de la France, tom. III. p. 16.

[12] The criticisms of the historian are far from flattering. "Versiculi debiles nullis pedibus . . . . quæ nulla ratione suscipi possunt." Greg. Tur., VI. 46.

[13] "Est hoc regnum Dei?" Gest. Reg. Franc., quoted at second hand from the French historians.

over the Sueves, still on the Spanish territory. A pestilence that had wasted his people seized upon his son; and for his sake Carraric was willing to think of other things than deeds of arms. He inquires about Martin, the saint not only of Tours, but of the whole West, and to his shrine the king orders offerings to be conveyed. "And if," he says, "they secure the recovery of my boy, let the Catholic faith be asked after, that I may believe what you say Martin believed." Notwithstanding all this, disease still clings to his son. Carraric sees that he has not yet done enough to obtain the aid of the saint. With all haste a church is raised in Martin's honor. On its completion, the king proclaims his determination to believe whatever the priests at Tours dictate, provided they send him some relics of the holy man. These he obtains, and with them, the deliverance of his son and his people from the pestilence. The story ends with the conversion of the Sueves to the Catholic religion.[14]

The spiritual condition of the Western races is still more evident in the trials which they called the judgments of God. It was no invention of theirs that the Divine authority should be invoked as a surer test of guilt and innocence than the authority of men. Such a course had been preferred even by the Heathen. But the states of the West were the first in which human judgments upon all the more important cases were totally displaced. Instead of hearing the proofs that could be brought on one

[14] Greg. Tur, De Mirac. Mart., I. 11.

side and the other, the judicial tribunals ordered the contending parties to submit themselves to the trials of chance or of skill on which the issue of their suits depended. Sometimes, they were to draw lots; at other times, they were to make oaths. Sometimes, it was food that they were to take while the wrath of God was called down to prevent the guilty from swallowing a morsel. At other times, the accused was to try his fortune by leaping into the water or by walking through fire. It would be long to describe the scenes to which these forms gave rise. Prayers and solemn ceremonies introduced the various stages of the judgment.[15] At its close, the guilt or the innocence of the parties on trial was announced with as much certainty as if the Angels of Mercy or of Vengeance had descended with sentences from Heaven.

Turning from the Western nations to the population whom they had conquered, we find no great difference in spiritual development. The Romans and their descendants were saved from many of the grievances which appeared amongst their victors. But their negligences were the more conspicuous. Disaster had not recalled them from the perversions of their fathers under the Empire. The same tendencies that had appeared in prosperity continued in adversity. There were some whom the darker day inspired with desires for spiritual culture. But the greater number remained unmoved.

[15] Cantu has gathered together a great variety of these formularies. Hist. Universelle, tom. VII. Notes Addit., pp. 510 *et seq.*

This was true even of the clergy. What they had been in the Empire their successors were in the Western kingdoms. Their religious authority was well nigh unquestionable. The Roman population acknowledged it. The victorious nations confessed it in their awe of the saint or the Divinity to whom the clergy were always appealing. The very Heathen, whether of Northern or of Roman origin, dreaded the influence of the clergy upon their rulers. Had this power never been disputed, the priest would have become as little of a spiritual believer as the most sceptical Heathen or the rudest Northerner. The temptation to rule would have prevailed over the obligation to be humble or to be useful in the midst of men. As it was, the spiritual development of the priest was generally quite as imperfect as that of his people.

Happily for the clergy and the principles intrusted to them, there were better influences at work upon them. Sometimes it was an impulse from within, at other times it was one from without that led the priesthood to spiritual pursuits. Persecution or sedition[16] often put a check to their authority. Not it, but obedience to the law of God, was seen to be the preservative against the oppression of the ruler or the licentiousness of the people. In such seasons the blessedness of spiritual liberty was recognized anew. At the head of those who suffered,

[16] See the proceedings of various councils. Agath., ap. Conc., tom. v. p. 522; Lyon., p. 721; Arvern., p. 950; Aurel., pp. 1280, 1380. Various instances occur in Greg. Tur., Vit. Patr., IV. 1, VI. 3.

the clergy then stood fellow-sufferers, yet fellow-freemen.

No one was more of a freeman, no one was more of a sufferer than Cæsarius, Bishop of Arles for forty years.[17] Twice exiled by his sovereigns,[18] he twice obtained his restoration. If his demeanor corresponded to the tone of his homilies, he was a signal instance of the elevation to which the Christian priest could attain by spiritual means. "Ye have heard," he says in one of his discourses, "how the kingdom of God is within you. . . . . I ask you therefore, beloved, to consider your consciences. Let us see if we have the kingdom enclosed within the fastenings of our souls. If righteousness, if peace, if joy be there, we are safe. . . . . Righteousness and peace are seen to be good works. Joy is understood to be the fruit of good works. . . . . What means 'my joy no man taketh from you,' but this, that no one taketh away your Lord? . . . . He who in turning to his conscience, shall not find righteousness, but covetousness, not peace, but discord, not joy in the hope of eternal life, but carnal pleasure in the love of luxury, let him understand that not Christ, the king of the Law, but a cruel tyrant reigns within him."[19]

The avenue to spiritual life lay through the Christian Church. But Cæsarius was far too true a Bishop to make the Church consist of a priesthood alone. "If ye do earnestly hunger and thirst after righteousness, then, so often as the word of God is

[17] 502 – 542.
[18] See note 62 to ch. VII.
[19] Hom. XII., ed. De la Bigne.

tardily preached to you, do not wait for us to give it to you of our own accord. Rather do ye yourselves exact it faithfully and thirstingly from us as a thing rightly due to you."[20] Yet it was not contumacy towards the clergy that the Bishop of Arles enjoined. "For he who knows how onerous is the load upon the shoulders of the clergy, comprehends that however assiduously we may preach the word of God, we do nevertheless render less than we owe unto you."[21] Where such words were spoken in sincerity, the mutual dependence of the people and of the priesthood was likely to be understood in days of peace as well as in days of peril.

One bond between the clergy and their fellow-believers appeared to be growing stronger. As the educated class of the period, they were brought into closer connection with those desirous of being educated. But the offices of the priesthood in imparting instruction were confined chiefly to their own order. To a certain degree this was unavoidable. The first duty incumbent upon them was to provide themselves with successors in the work which none but their successors could carry out. This was more seriously attempted by introducing the candidates for orders into the households of the Bishop or his Presbytery.[22] "This seemeth good," declares a canon of the council at Vaison in Gaul, "that all our Presbyters settled in parishes should receive into their houses the younger men, according to the

[20] Hom. XXII.

[21] Ibid.

[22] In domo Ecclesiæ sub Episcopali præsentia." Conc. Tolet., c. 1, ap. Conc., tom. V. p. 877.

custom which we understood to prevail with great advantage throughout Italy. These they are to nourish spiritually as good fathers, endeavoring to make them read in the psalms, to encourage them in their sacred studies, and to instruct them in the law of the Lord, to the end both that they may provide fit successors to themselves and that they may receive eternal recompense from the Lord."[23] The charge was one of the great spiritual preparations for the future.

All that can be said concerning the spiritual activity of the clergy must not conceal their spiritual imperfections. Many a strange sight was to be seen amongst them in these tempestuous times. It might be the public scourging of a priest.[24] It might be the public conviction of a prelate.[25] It might be an act of oppression on the part of the superior.[26] It might be a tumult of insurrection on the part of the inferiors. In either case, the monarch or the magistrate, the warrior or the noble, was continually found to have been the instigator.[27] Set a few such facts as these against a thousand deeds or hopes of a higher nature; and the clergy may well seem unequal to the spiritual necessities of the age.

Fortunately, there were others in the Church to supply some of the necessities for which the regular clergy could not provide. One class consisted of mis-

[23] Conc. Vas., c. 1, ap. Conc., tom. v. p. 822.

[24] Conc. Agath., c. 41, ap. Conc., tom. v. p. 528.

[25] Conc. Carpent., ib., p. 805.

[26] See the proceedings at the councils of Orleans, ib., pp. 1274 *et seq.*

[27] "A potentioribus seculi." Conc. Arvern., c. 4, ib., p. 950. So Conc. Aurel , c. 22, p. 1280.

sionaries. They were of the clergy, inasmuch as they were ordained; but the lives which they led separated them as a distinct order from the Priests or Bishops with whom they were associated in name. It needed peculiar courage in those days to devote one's self to missionary labors. Terrible as were the races that had stormed the imperial realms, those behind them must have seemed still more terrible. To these approaching nations, the missionaries of the period addressed themselves, despite all apprehensions of suffering or of captivity. None bore a nobler part in the spiritual preparations for the future.

Foremost amongst many was Patrick the Apostle of Ireland. To that remote island missionaries had but lately found their way, yet only to be driven back.[28] The greater the difficulty of converting the savage islanders, the greater was the earnestness of Patrick to carry on the enterprise. Born of Christian parents, near the Western coast of Britain, he had been made captive by an Irish chieftain, in whose service he spent his boyhood. When he escaped, it seems to have been with the resolution of returning in the service of the faith by which alone the hardships of his bondage had been relieved.[29] To recount the instructions that he gave, the conversions that he made, the miracles that he wrought, the churches and the monasteries that he founded, would be difficult. One thing deserves to be mentioned

[28] "Palladius was the first Bishop." Nennius, 50. Prosper., Chron., Ad Ann. 432.

[29] Confessio S. Patricii de Vit. et Conv Sua, 1 *et seq.*, ap. Bolland., Acta Sanct., Mart., tom. II. p. 533.

with greater emphasis. Unlike many of his contemporaries who thought that it was enough to baptize Christians without instructing them, Patrick taught his disciples to prove their new faith by adopting habits and occupations at variance with their previous lives. A beautiful legend relates how he besought God to show him the effects of his life-long labors, and how there appeared to him a countless flock of many-colored birds, in whom he saw the saints that were to rise with him as their apostle at the day of judgment.[30] Dying after "active working," as the chronicler says, "of good to mankind,"[31] Patrick left Columba to imitate his example in Ireland and upon the continent.

Another class more distinctly separated from the clergy consisted of those professing the monastic life. "There are four orders of them," writes a contemporary. "First, there are the Cœnobites, that is, the members militant according to a rule. Next are the Anchorites or Hermits, who, after long probation in their monastery, go forth from their brethren to single combat. Then come the noxious Sarabaites, living by twos or threes, if not alone, without a pastor, not in the Lord's sheepfold, but in their own. To these desire stands in the place of law. . . . . A fourth order comprises the Girovagians, the Ambulatory or Errant, who spend three or four days at the most in a single cell. Always wandering and never stable, they obey their own appetites, whereunto they are enslaved. These are worse even than

[30] Nennius, 54.

[31] Id., ib. Between 450 and 500. The precise date is uncertain.

the Sarabaites. But one would rather be silent, than speak concerning the very miserable manner in which they all live." [32]

The account may be trusted. It shows the result to which the principle of individual independence had led amongst its seekers in the monastic life. Whatever power could be exerted by monks in restoring or in preparing the liberty of their race seemed lost. Lost forever it might have been, but for the appearance of one by whom the necessity of monastic reform could be both perceived and supplied. It was this reformer who drew up the account of the monks just transcribed.

He was Benedict of Nursia. The child of an illustrious house, [33] he was nurtured in the midst of the disasters brought upon Italy by Odoacer and Theodoric. When but fourteen years old, and still pursuing his studies at Rome, he was seized with a desire to desert his friends and the changing world in which they dwelt. Flying to Subiaco, the boy hid himself in a cave, where mountain shepherds brought him food in return for the winning instruction which he gave them. [34] He was a young man when he received an invitation to become the Abbot of a neighboring monastery. "Your habits and mine," he said to the monks who sought him, "will never agree." The monks renewed their entreaties that he would come. His hopes of improving them were

[32] Reg. Benedict., 1. See Augusti's citations describing the different monastic orders, Christ. Archäol., vol. xi. pp. 70 – 72.

[33] He was born in 480. Greg. Magn., Dial. Vit. et Mirac. Ven. Bened., Proœm.

[34] Id., ib., lib. i. c. 1.

excited; and he removed to the monastery. But his stay was of the briefest. The rigid rules that he instantly established for monks accustomed to all kinds of license provoked them to madness. They would have poisoned him, but he escaped them, to return to his hermitage.[35]

The earnestness with which he practised his austerities had been increased by his experience at the monastery. His fame spread far and wide. So great was the number, so ardent the enthusiasm of those whom it attracted to Subiaco, that there were soon twelve monasteries built about his cavern. Children were sent to him to be educated; men came of their own accord to imbibe his principles; and he became the head of a community apparently devoted to his behests. It was but apparently. The evils of monastic life had sunk too deeply to be eradicated on the first or on the second trial. Benedict, offended, and even menaced, fled from his own monasteries.[36] He was forty-eight years old; and all his efforts had turned out failures.

They were failures only to the eye. His disappointments had but widened the circle of his resolutions. When he fled from Subiaco, it was to a larger as well as to a loftier sphere of exertion. The sight of a temple, still sacred to Apollo, at Monte Cassino, determined him to tarry where not only the monastic but the secular life required reform. His generous purposes prevailed. In room

[35] Greg., Dial., I. 3. [36] Id, ib, I. 8.

of the Heathen there soon stood a Christian altar.[37] By its side rose the buildings of a monastery, in which Benedict spent the remainder of his days.

His third trial proved successful. The monks assembled at Monte Cassino received his statutes and obeyed them. His code was fashioned according to the experiences of his life. The Abbot, elected by the monks, was invested with the authority which Benedict had found indispensable to the government of a monastery.[38] But there was to be no oppression. "As often as any important measures," ran one of the laws, "are to be taken, let the Abbot call the whole congregation. . . . . And the Abbot is to remember that unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required."[39] From the Abbot down to the meanest of the fraternity, all were laid under a new responsibility. Hitherto, the monk had been as free to break as to make his vows; but to this Benedict put an end. "Here is the law," the stranger was to be told. "Here is the law under which thou desirest to do service. If thou canst keep it, enter; but if thou canst not, stay away." In case the stranger declared his readiness to bide by the law, he became a novice. At the end of the year, he was again allowed his choice either to depart or to remain. The promise to remain was irrevocable.[40]

The monk was admitted to no fraternity of ease or of simple contemplation. Upon all rested the

[37] Greg., Dial., I. 8. Chron. Monast. Cassin., 1, ap. Muratori, Rer. Ital. Script., tom. IV. p. 248.

[38] Reg. Bened., 2, 64.

[39] Ib., 2, 3.

[40] Ib., 58.

same obligation to labor, physically, intellectually and spiritually. "Idleness," proclaimed their lawgiver, "is the enemy of the soul. Therefore must the brethren be occupied, at some seasons with manual, at others, with devotional exercises."[41] The mention of the fruits to be gathered[42] suggests the toils of the brethren in the field. That of the books to be read by the monks,[43] that of the schools to be opened for children,[44] recalls their intellectual avocations. The rest of their time was filled up with spiritual exertions. "Above all," opens a chapter, the kernel of the entire code, "above all things else to be radically extirpated from the monastery, is the error of imagining that any one possesses anything of his own."[45] Each one was to stand on the same footing with the rest. Each was to be free; while no one was to be raised too high to endanger the freedom of his brethren. The liberty thus assured was spiritual. All that was carnal had been renounced in order to attain to all that was spiritual. The reform of Benedict[46] was the elevation of the whole monastic order.

What he had reformed, another refined. Long the minister of the Ostrogothic court in its days of prosperity,[47] Aurelius Cassiodorus had become too aged

[41] Reg. Bened., 48.
[42] Ib., ib.
[43] Ib., ib.
[44] Ib, 59.
[45] "Præcipue hoc vitium radicitus amputandum est de monasterio, ne quis præsumat aliquid dare aut accipere sine jussione Abbatis; *neque aliquid habere proprium, nullam omnino rem.*" Reg. Bened., 33.
[46] He died in 543, at the age of sixty-three. Greg., Dial., I. 37.
[47] On the honors which he enjoyed and the services which he rendered, see his biography, published with his works, ed. Rotom., and the letter ap. Var., IX. 24.

to maintain himself there in its days of peril.[48] He retired to his native place, Squillace, in the southern extremity of Italy, and there became the founder and the abbot of a monastery. However bowed by years his energies were, his tastes remained unaltered. In power, he had been the munificent patron of letters; in retirement, he resolved to constitute himself their preserver. His object may be gathered from the effort which he had made a year or two before, to induce the Bishop of Rome to found a Christian school. "Then had I hoped," he says, "that the soul might have been instructed in its eternal salvation, while the tongue of the faithful might have been trained in chaste and pure discourse."[49] "And it is my wish, I confess," he wrote to his monks at Squillace, "that the pursuits of the mind may interest you more than any occupations of the body."[50] "Nor have the most holy Fathers," he declares, "decreed aught implying the condemnation even of secular literature. For from this source do our perceptions derive no little aid to understand the sacred Scriptures..... On the other hand, many of the Fathers have been learned in that literature, and so abiding by the law of the Lord, they have arrived at true wisdom."[51] "Consider," wrote Cassiodorus, "what a cause hath been entrusted to you, the interest of Christians, the treas-

[48] He was born about 470. Vit. Cass., Pars I. 7, 8. It was now 538, when Belisarius had been two years in Italy.

[49] De Inst. Div. Litt., Præf.

[50] "Ego tamen fateor votum meum quod inter vos quæcumque possunt corporeo labore compleri, antiquariorum mihi studia (si tamen veraciter scribant) non immerito forsitan plus placere." Ib., 30.

[51] Ib., 28.

ure of the Church, the illumination of spirits. Be ye watchful, therefore, that no falsehood mingle with the truth of your knowledge, no stain with its purity, no corruption with its integrity."[52] The exhortation was too comprehensive to be obeyed. But that it should have been uttered proves the dignity to which the monastic order was summoned.

The importance of the monks at the period in question can hardly be exaggerated. Amidst the din of arms and of revolutions that prevailed, the principles on which mankind most depended could not but be interrupted and endangered. The spiritual preparations for the future would be more securely made where self-sacrifice and self-control were at least nominally maintained. This was the case with the monasteries of the period. Infested as many of them were with passions and intrigues, there were some in which the liberty of the subject could be found, some in which it could be preserved. To preserve it was to make the best spiritual preparation that could be made for the generations to come.

Notwithstanding all the confusion of the times, there were striking signs of spiritual tendencies. They appear amongst all classes, beginning with the very highest. Amongst the captives made by Clothaire the Frank, in his campaign against the Thuringians, was Radegonde, a maiden of the royal house of that nation. Conveyed to the capital of

[52] De Inst. Div. Litt., 15. Cassiodorus died about 565. Vit., Pars II. 52.

the conqueror, she was there educated at his orders, and finally espoused by him.[53] Her devotion, however, was stronger than her ambition, stronger than any love of the rude splendor characterizing the court of Clothaire. He would have diverted her from her religious exercises by scorn. "I seem," he said, "to have married a nun rather than a queen."[54] But as she persevered, the king grew cold. He would conquer her, he may have thought, by indifference. Probably his affection for her, never very profound, was exhausted. At all events, she continued her offices of charity and of penance as if forgotten by the king and his boisterous vassals. Suddenly, her brother, the heir of the Thuringian monarchy, was put to death.[55] It was but the common way of preventing an insurrection or a revolution. Yet it touched Radegonde to the heart.[56] She fled from the court where she had reigned, to seek peace in the Church to which she had long devoted herself.[57] Ordained a Deaconess, she became the founder of a convent at Poitiers.[58] The queen was changed into the saint.[59]

Such examples amongst the ruling classes must

[53] Greg. Tur., III. 4, 7.

[54] Fortunatus, Vit. Rad. Reg., cap. II. § 5.

[55] Greg. Tur., III. 7.

[56] It happened, says the biographer, "ut hæc religiosius viveret." Fortunatus, Vit. Rad. Reg., II. 10.

[57] She begs the Bishop, to whom she addresses herself, "ut ipsam mutata veste Domino consecraret." Id., ib.

[58] "Vers l'année 544." Sismondi, Hist. des Franç., tom. I. p. 250.

[59] Her letter, "Omnibus Episcopis," says, "Vinculis laicalibus absoluta, Divina providente et inspirante clementia, ad religionis normam visa sum voluntarie, duce Christo, translata." Ap. Greg. Tur., IX. 42. Her asceticism and superstition are described in Greg. Tur., De Glor. Mart., I. 5. Fortunatus, Vit. Rad. Reg., capp. III. IV.

have been followed by many amongst their inferiors. Many a nun and monk, many a missionary and priest proved the disposition of all orders to spiritual improvement. Yet were we to judge from the aspect of the masses, it would be to a different decision that we should arrive. Alike the Northern and the Roman races, the bond and the free, are driven before the storm that had arisen with warfare and oppression. The few points of refuge discernible through the tempest are all that betoken the spiritual preparations of the period.

The liberty of the subject, in other words, of the inward world, was far from being secure. Yet it had its protection. In having that at such a time, it was assured of its triumph in a more congenial age. Upon its future triumph, upon its present protection, the liberty of the outward world depended.

CHAPTER X.

REIGN OF JUSTINIAN.

"Not one word more of the consumed time. . . . . .
For we are old, and on our quick'st decrees
The inaudible and noiseless foot of time
Steals ere we can effect them."
All's Well That Ends Well, v. 3.

The preparations sketched in the preceding chapters were confined to a portion only of the former domains of Rome. While its realms in the West were penetrated and dismembered, those in the East had been left comparatively unbroken. In escaping the woes, they had forfeited the redeeming prospects of the Western provinces. The East knew no preparations for the future.

It was rather clinging to the results of the past. Nor merely with the feeble tenacity of age. Something of its earlier energy returned to the Eastern Empire, with its great sovereign Justinian. Not only should the things of old be retained in the Orient, but they should be restored to the Occident. The West and the East should once more be united in a Roman Empire.

Had length of reign been sufficient to secure the power of the Eastern sovereigns, they would have been strong indeed during the half century preceding the accession of Justinian. But three Emperors had occupied the throne; the first, Zeno, for fourteen years,[1] the second, Anastasius, for twenty-seven,[2] and the third, Justin, for eight.[3] Yet there was not one year of the forty-nine without its calamities arising from abroad or its seditions springing up at home.[4] Superstition and bigotry were always at hand when license subsided or when invasions were stayed.[5] Every reign, every year confirmed the title of the Eastern as the Lower Empire.

Justinian succeeded to his uncle Justin at the age of forty years and more. Both the uncle and the nephew were of Gothic parentage, and of Gothic as well as Roman race.[6] The associations of Justinian, a native of Taurasium in Dardania,[7] and in after years a hostage at the court of Theodoric the Ostrogoth,[8] were anything but Roman. Roman, however, to a certain degree, were his purposes. The possession of the East suggested the conquest of the West. It was a Roman idea to recover what had once belonged to the Empire. But it was a Gothic idea to war with the Vandal and the Ostrogoth, the

[1] 477–491.

[2] 491–518.

[3] 518–527.

[4] See the accounts in Evagrius, III. 25 *et seq.* Theophanes, pp. 196 *et seq.* Theod. Lector, I. 37 *et seq.* Proc., Bell. Pers., I. 7 *et seq.*, Bell. Goth., II. 14 *et seq.*

[5] The Henoticon or Concordate of Zeno (482) furnishes a singular chapter in ecclesiastical history. It was repealed by Justin (518). See Evag., III. 13 *et seq.*

[6] "Uprauda a suis gentilibus dictus est [Justinianus]." Theophilus, ap. Aleman., In Hist. Arcan. Not., p. 418.

[7] About 483. Proc., Ædif., IV. 1.

[8] Theophilus, as before, p. 383.

same enemies with whom the ancestors of Justinian had battled upon distant territory. To carry out his purposes, Justinian needed Gothic even more than Roman means. It was of no avail to assert his claim to the Western provinces, unless he could make it good by arms and victories.

The first point, however, was to prove himself actually a sovereign. This, in some respects, was not so easy as it seemed. What with regents and officers, courtiers and troops, the recent Emperors had been but puppets in the hands of their ministers or their relatives. Justinian himself had been the manager of his uncle Justin. He would fain have avoided his turn of being managed. For his wife he chose a woman of a class so low and of a profligacy so notorious that the repeal of some existing statutes was requisite to legalize the marriage.[9] Such an Empress as Theodora might sway her lord in secret. But she could never crush him in public without greater risk to herself than to him. Of the family of the Emperor there was but one, his nephew, who, with his sons, attained to any participation in public affairs.[10] More prominent places were held by ministers like John of Cappadocia, or by generals like Belisarius and Narses. But Justinian never loosened his hold upon those whom he thus exalted. He made them feel that they were in his service, as effectually as they could have wished, had they imitated their predecessors, to make him feel that he

[9] Proc., Hist. Arcan., 9.

[10] Germanus. His sons were Justin and Justinian. The father died in command of the forces employed against the Ostrogoths. Proc., Bell. Goth., III. 39, 40.

was in theirs. The more brilliant their labors, the more unstable were their rewards. The inferior functionaries, whether civil or military, attached to the imperial court, could but imitate the subordination of their superiors.

It was less difficult for Justinian to make himself master of his capital. Such, however, had been the disorders occasioned by the factions of Constantinople, that the historian describes them as having shaken not only the city but the Empire, "as if," he adds, "its cities had been laid waste by enemies or its lands laid open by earthquakes."[11] One party, styled the Blues, professed allegiance to the sovereign in opposition to the disallegiance imputed to their adversaries, the Greens.[12] In reality, disallegiance prevailed on both sides. They united a few years after the accession of Justinian in proclaiming a new Emperor. So much alarm did this excite, that Justinian thought of abdication. But on his managing to turn the arms of the Blues against the Greens, thirty thousand of the two parties fell in the streets of Constantinople.[13] Thenceforth Justinian held possession of his capital.

Beyond the capital and the court, Justinian had only to imitate the government of his predecessors. Something, perhaps, was altered in point of form on account of the alterations in point of character

[11] Proc., Hist. Arcan., 7.

[12] There were at one time four parties, Reds and Whites, as well as Blues and Greens. Procopius (Bell. Pers., I. 24) speaks of the latter two only, in the reign of Justinian.

[13] 532. Proc., Bell. Pers., I. 24. Marcell., Chron., XI. 10. Chron. Pasch., pp. 620 *et seq.* Theoph., Chron., pp. 278 *et seq.* Zonaras, XIV. 6.

amongst the subject classes. By far the greater number of these now consisted of descendants from the invaders or the immigrants of the last one hundred and fifty years. To rule these, the Emperor required to be by turns the Goth and the Oriental, as well as the Roman. But the change of parts through which he had to run was merely outward. He was all the while the absolute sovereign. Those whom he ruled were all the while the submissive subjects. Taxation did not provoke resistance amongst the civilians. The denial of pay or of privilege did not excite the soldiery to mutiny. At the same time that he ruled imperiously, he ruled magnificently. His public works obtained for him the name of the Builder.[14] His patronage of the silk trade[15] might have added to his titles as it did to his splendors. It was forgotten that he was a Goth. He was the Roman, and more than the Roman sovereign.

All that the law of Rome could contribute towards the grandeur of Justinian was employed. "We have resolved," he wrote to the Senate of Constantinople, "to further the common good and to abridge the prolixity of processes at law."[16] First came a Code compiled from the statutes of the four preceding centuries. Next followed a Digest formed from the writings of the ancient jurists. "This is to be ob-

[14] Ὁ τῆς οἰκουμένης οἰκιστής. Proc., Ædif., iv. 1.

[15] St.-Martin, ap. Le Beau, Hist. du Bas-Empire, tom. ix. pp. 221 *et seq.* See a memoir by Pardessus on Le Commerce de la Soie chez les Anciens, Mém. de l'Inst., Insc. et B. Lett., tom. xv.

[16] De Novo Codice Faciendo, ad init. The code was published in 529.

served," writes Justinian to Trebonian, into whose charge the Digest was committed, "that if you find anything improperly expressed, you are to change it. So that what you have selected and arranged, shall seem to be true and good and authentic..... But how is antiquity to interfere with our laws? ..... Thus far; that if the writings of the ancients be found to be altered in expression or arrangement, it shall not be made an objection to our Code, but shall be imputed to our will and pleasure."[17] After the Digest, appeared the Institutes, or Elements. "We ordered Trebonian," runs the Proem, "our Master of the Court, and our Professors, Theophilus and Dorotheus, to compose these Institutes under our advice and dictation. This we commanded, that ye," the students at law in the imperial realms, "might learn your first legal rudiments, not from any traditions, but from our imperial splendor..... Ye can begin at the beginning, if ye are worthy of such honor and such felicity as to obtain both the commencement and the termination of your acquirements from your sovereign."[18] The old law was fairly impressed into the service of its new master. "For what is included here," he declared, "that, and naught besides, is to be obeyed."[19]

The grasp of the Gothic sovereign was soon laid upon the Roman Church. The Heretic, the Jew

[17] De Concept. Digest., 7. The Digest was published in 533.

[18] Instit., Procem., 3, 5. This was published in 533.

[19] De Confirm. Digest., 19. Even commentaries were prohibited, Ib., 21.

and the Heathen[20] were not expected to make more entire submission than the Catholic. In the East, the point was easily gained. In the West even, it was carried, but less securely. To humble the Catholic power in the Western states, Justinian seems to have declared "the see of Constantinople the chief of all sees."[21] The Roman see was assailed almost from the moment of the irruption of the imperial forces into Italy. The Bishop of Rome, Agapetus, was then obliged to repair to Constantinople. "I desired to come to Justinian," said the prelate, "as to a most Christian Emperor; but I find another Diocletian."[22] Silverius, the successor of Agapetus, was banished for real or imputed opposition to the designs of Justinian upon Italy.[23] Vigilius succeeded to the bishopric on condition of complete subservience to the imperial will.[24] Then the Emperor assented to the supremacy of the Roman see.[25] It might rule the Church if it would be ruled by him.

Justinian did not waive his prerogatives. An edict against the doctrine of Origen was followed by a proclamation condemning the leaders, like Theodoret of Cyrus, by whose writings liberal Christianity was still upheld.[26] To this sentence the see

[20] On their sufferings see Theoph., Chron., p. 276; Malalas, xviii. pp. 445, 449; and Beugnot, Destr. du Paganisme, Livre xii. ch. v., vi.

[21] Cod. Just., lib. i. tit. ii. 24.

[22] 536. Anast., De Vit. Rom. Pont., 58. The journey of the Bishop is ascribed to various motives. Id., ib.; Liberat., Brev., 21; Zonaras, xiv. 8.

[23] 537. Proc., Bell. Goth., i. 25.

[24] Anast., De Vit. Rom. Pont., 60. Liberat., Brev., 22.

[25] Novell. cxxxi. cap. 2.

[26] The condemned doctrines were embraced in Three Chapters, so called. One was directed against

of Constantinople and its dependents submitted. At Rome a more generous spirit was manifested. Thereupon Justinian summoned the Bishop Vigilius to Constantinople. Leaving the West determined upon resistance, Vigilius found courage to oppose the imperial doctrines on his arrival in the East. Five years the Bishop remained at Constantinople, whence he succeeded in making his escape to claim the right of asylum at Chalcedon. His refusal to adhere to the decrees of the general council convened at Constantinople to support the edict of condemnation,[27] resulted in his banishment. This he endured but for a single year, when he yielded. He was returning to Italy, where his place had been given to another at the imperial command, when he died.[28] His submission was imitated by his successor Pelagius. It seemed as if Justinian had proved himself the head of the Western, as well as of the Eastern Church.

But the array in opposition was still formidable. Not merely prelates but sovereigns, were taking part in questions that led to such momentous consequences.[29] Beneath the thrones of the rulers, the masses were stirring. Amongst the champions of the resistance provoked by the designs of Justinian, Facundus, Bishop of Byzacium in Africa, stood

Theodoret, the other two against Ibas of Edessa and Theodore of Mopsuestia. Evag., iv. 38. Liberat., Brev., 22. Facundus, Pro Defens. Tr. Cap., ii. 3, iv. 4. Conc., tom. vi. pp. 312 *et seq.*

[27] In 553. Ap. Conc., tom. vi. pp. 15 *et seq.*

[28] Facundus, Lib. Cont. Mocian. Anastas., De Vit. Rom. Pont., 60. Victor Tunun., Chron.

[29] See the replies of Pelagius to the questionings of Childebert, the third son of Clovis. Ap. Conc., tom. vi. pp. 473, 479.

foremost. "No sovereign," he wrote in defiance of the mandates from the East, "no sovereign hath authority in these matters. They belong to priests alone. . . . . We have pledged ourselves, O Emperor, to keep the faith wherewith we have been entrusted. To do aught against this would be to perjure ourselves."[30] The liberality of Facundus appears in more than these words of mere opposition. "Our church," he writes, "is as the School of Christ. And all His believers are said to be His disciples; nor can any one be correctly called a disciple who learns nothing. Yet nothing can be learned that was not previously unknown. . . . . Wherefore," he adds with fervor, "wherefore we are to know that ignorance cannot make a man a Heretic. For not ignorance, but obstinate adherence to falsehood is that which is opposed to truth."[31] Here lay the principle not only of future resistance to the oppressor, but of future deliverance to the oppressed. Under such a principle the Church was safe from Justinian.

It remains to be seen what Justinian could effect by arms. In the East, his object was to preserve his domains. For this he engaged in defensive warfare against the Persians[32] and the Northern races. Of the latter, some became invaders, sweeping in to the very walls of Constantinople.[33] But the valor

[30] Pro Def. Tr. Cap., IV. 4, XII. 5.

[31] Ib., XII. 1.

[32] Especially with the king Chosroës. Proc., Bell. Pers., II. 3. Agath., IV. 30. Menander, Leg. ad Gent., 3, 4.

[33] The Bulgarians. Belisarius won his last victory against them. Proc., Bell. Pers., II. 4. Agath., V. 11 *et seq.*

of foreign mercenaries, led by the skill of foreign generals, was successfully employed by the Emperor. He had artifices to urge and tributes to yield where mere military defences failed. Excepting some concessions on the frontiers, the realms to which Justinian succeeded were preserved.

To increase them he entered into offensive warfare against the Western kingdoms. A letter to the Vandals of Africa called upon them to side with the Emperor in restoring one of their princes who had been deposed.[34] As soon as there was no pretext of avenging him, the imperial general, Belisarius, harangued his troops about recovering the possessions of the Empire.[35] It was the Empire of Justinian, as much a stranger to Rome as any Vandal chieftain, for which Belisarius, himself a stranger, and his soldiers, themselves strangers,[36] contended. A single campaign sufficed to make Justinian the master of the African territories.[37] His army, still under the command of Belisarius, was almost immediately directed against Italy. The same pretexts, first of avenging the wrongs of an Ostrogothic queen, and then of regaining the imperial domains, were put forward.[38] But the strength of the Ostrogoths proved greater than that of the Vandals. Belisarius,[39] was succeeded by Narses,

[34] Proc., Bell. Vand., I. 16.

[35] Id., ib., I. 19.

[36] Id., ib., I. 11. Bell. Goth., I. 5.

[37] 533, 534. Proc., Bell. Vand., I. 15 *et seq.*; II. 1–7.

[38] Proc., Bell. Goth., I. 7. Cass., Var., X. 32.

[39] After refusing the crown of Italy and that "of the West." Proc., Bell. Goth., II. 29, 30. He was recalled for the second time in 544. His subsequent misfortunes are well known. See Lord Mahon's Life of Belisarius, pp. 431 *et seq.*

battle followed battle, Rome was repeatedly taken and repeatedly retaken,[40] before the forces of Justinian prevailed at the expiration of seventeen years.[41] To the Italian victories succeeded various conquests from the Visigoths upon the coast of Spain.[42] So far the Gothic Emperor triumphed in extending his dominions.

But they could be extended no farther. When the war broke out between the Emperor and the Ostrogothic monarch, both sought aid from the Franks.[43] Both, however, were attacked by the Franks, who though represented as having been defeated, obtained portions of the Ostrogothic territories both from the Ostrogoths themselves and from Justinian.[44] Some later inroads of an individual rather than a national character were more effectually resisted by the imperial general then in command of the Italian conquests.[45] But the power of the Franks, supported by their German confederates or tributaries,[46] proved decisive in arresting the marches of Justinian. It was even feared that the Franks

[40] Five times in all. 536, 546, 547, 549, 552. Proc., Bell. Goth., I. 15, III. 20, 24, 36, IV. 33.

[41] 535–553. Id., ib., I. 7 *et seq.*, II. 1 *et seq.*, III. 1 *et seq.*, IV. 21 *et seq.* Agath., I. 1 *et seq.*, II. 1 *et seq.* Hist. Misc., XVI. p. 106.

[42] Isidor., Chron. Goth., pp. 217 *et seq.* Jorn., De Reb. Get., 58. Greg. Tur., IV. 8.

[43] Proc., Bell. Goth., I. 5.

[44] 539. Id., ib., II. 25. Jorn., De Reb. Get., 59. Proc., Bell. Goth., III. 33.

[45] 540, 553. Greg. Tur., III. 32, IV. 9. Agath., I. 5 *et seq.*, II. 1–10. Paul. Diac., De Gest. Langob.

[46] "L'empire des Francs pouvait alors être considéré comme composé de quatre grands provinces en Germanie et de tout autant dans les Gaules. Les premières étaient la France Germanique, l'Allemagne, la Bavière et la Thuringe ; les secondes, l'Austrasie, la Neustrie, la Bourgogne, et l'Aquitaine." Sismondi, Hist. des Franç., tom. I. p. 304. Burgundy was conquered in 534. Greg. Tur., III. 11. Proc., Bell. Goth., I. 13.

would descend upon Constantinople.[47] The nation in alliance with the Catholic power prevails against him by whom that power had been assailed.

We have traced the policy of Justinian as if he had been consistent in its conception and its pursuit. But to see him as he was, we must turn from the battle-fields of Italy or the council-chambers of Constantinople to the apartments in which he lived doubting and intriguing, wasting his best resources, sacrificing his best generals, wavering and yielding throughout his reign. "He had been the first," says one Byzantine chronicler, "of those reigning at Byzantium to prove himself a Roman Emperor in name and in deed."[48] "For it was he," adds another, "who recovered for Rome the things that belonged to Rome."[49] Yet despite all adulation, Justinian lived to know that he had recovered nothing, proved nothing which would endure. "Better were it for us," the Romans had sent to tell him, "better to serve the Goths than to serve you."[50] Still in the midst of uncertainties, though still devoted to his own aggrandizement, the aged Emperor expired.[51]

Centralization, so far as it was imperial and Roman, died with him. He had bereft it of its last faint breath in attempting to revive it in an-

[47] Agath., I. 4.

[48] Id., v. 14.

[49] Τῇ δὲ Ῥώμῃ τὰ Ῥώμης ἀπέσωσεν. Lydus, De Mag. Rom., III. 55.

[50] The complaint was nominally directed against Narses. Paul. Diac., De Gest. Lang., II. 55.

[51] In 565, at the age of eighty-three. Agathias (v. 13, 14) describes his old age and that of the Empire in forcible language.

other Empire of Rome. Its corpse lay unburied in the East. Even in the West there were some scattered bones above the soil. But there could be no more revival of the remains. The Roman Empire was past and gone.

CHAPTER XI.

OPENING OF MODERN TIMES.

"It is a subject of awful meditation. Before this, ... the annals of all time have not furnished an instance of a *complete* revolution. This revolution seems to have extended even to the constitution of the mind of man."

BURKE, *Letter to a Noble Lord.*

THE forest had been penetrated. Its tangled thickets, its gloomy recesses had yielded to the blows of man, strengthened by the laws of nature and of God. No more would the earth be cumbered by one unbroken overgrowth of oppression. The ancient centralization lay prostrate.

It had fallen before the principle which it had for ages overpowered. This was the liberty of the subject, in other words, of every individual, the subject as well as the ruler, who recognized his responsibilities to his fellow-creatures and to his Creator. It was a liberty which the ruler obtained in fulfilling his duties. In fulfilling his, the subject obtained it likewise. It was the liberty to live according to the law of love proclaimed by Christ the Lord. No liberty of antiquity could compare with it. No

dominion of antiquity could repress it. It rose against the centralization of the past. It was sustained with zeal constantly interrupted, with purity incessantly perverted. It was combated with all the corruption, with all the passion which the ancient system could excite. Yet the centralization, though oppressing, though resisting, though reappearing, at length succumbed. The forest of primeval oppression was felled.

The seed of liberty had been sown in a single field. There it had shot up, notwithstanding all the adverse influences to which it was exposed. Amongst the Christians themselves it had to struggle through dissensions and perversions. Amongst the race from whom the Christians were at first collected, it had to bear with cruelties and persecutions. But the martyrs did their work. They believed. They died. The example of their death, the memory of their faith proved too earnest, too mighty for any oppressors to beat down. The field was defended. The seed was saved.

It was presently involved in greater perils. The cessation of persecution seemed to threaten the existence of liberty more menacingly than persecution itself had ever done. Amidst increasing strife with one another, amidst increasing hostility towards their adversaries, the Christians rose to power. The martyrs were succeeded by the prelates of the early centuries. Becoming powerful, the Christians appeared to lay aside all that their predecessors had deemed most precious. The liberty of the subject was denied by Christian rulers. What they denied

to others they lost for themselves. It proved, however, but a temporary reaction, occasioned by the necessity of constructing a Christian power, as a stay amidst the impending convulsions.

The field was rent. Where the Roman Christians had stood alone, the Northern Christians pressed in with sword and fire. The prelates of the South were confronted by the invaders from the North. It was a crisis. The prelates were to be driven back to the position of subjects. They were to learn the value of the liberty which they had rejected. It was to be restored to those whom they had oppressed. On the other hand, it was to be established among the Northern Christians. They were men of dominion. But they were men trained to personal rights and to personal responsibilities from which the liberty of the subject would receive, as it were, a welcome. Allying themselves with the power organized amongst the Christians of the Empire, the Northern Christians became in a measure united with the Roman. Together they engaged in the preparations for the advancing period. Together they withstood the last effort to restore the imperial centralization. Together they prepared the union of the future.

This was the appointed work of the Early Christians. They were to prepare the union one day destined to take the place of the ancient centralization. It could not do this at once. The races of antiquity had been for ages tending the system of centralization. For ages had the Christian races been levelling it. Where the forest had stood, a

thousand forms of noxious vegetation would inevitably rise. The plenteous harvest, the peaceful home could not appear, while the crash of the falling institutions was still resounding. But the fairer scenes in which the lot of humanity was to be cast were drawing nearer. The stretching meadows where the humble would labor, the lofty heights to which the aspiring would ascend, lay free to the advancing generations. Union could not be matured; but it was prepared.

The preparation, though no more than a preparation, was the greatest revolution through which humanity could have passed. No change of rulers, no change of institutions that had ever been made amongst men, could compare with the magnitude of the changes achieved amongst the Early Christians. Nor could any other vicissitudes in which it was possible for them to have been the agents, have wrought so stupendous results as those now accomplished. Not only the form, but the spirit of society was altered. There could be no destruction of centralization, there could be no foundation of union, without a liberty such as no earlier period had known, no earlier race conceived. The freedom of every human being who believed, who labored, who endured, who hoped, was the liberty established amongst the Early Christians. The effect upon every human society was sure to be produced. Already were the few bound to the many as well as the many to the few. Already were the superiors called to become the benefactors as well as the rulers of the inferiors. It might be but an approach

to union. Yet the approach itself was the most momentous, the most entire of revolutions.

This was the opening of modern times. Although only opened, they would expand. Weak as men were, weak and broken as they were still to be, a higher strength than their own led them onward. Above them as they struggled, above them as they sank, the light of Heaven shone full of consolation and of inspiration. The liberty that would otherwise have faltered, was thus sustained. The union that would otherwise have lain shapeless, was thus moulded and beautified. To the aid of progress in union, in liberty, in all that was free, in all that was true, Providence itself stood pledged. "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." [1]

[1] S. John, III. 17.

"And fresh as when it first was shed,
Springs forth the Saviour's blood." — KEBLE.

THE END.

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